MARVEL
Age
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JULY 1993
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X-MEN
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MARVEL
SUPER HEROES
VIDEO GAME!
Details Inside.

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It's all about imagination.

You read a comic book, and your imagination fills in the story that takes place between the panels. Your mind's eye creates the motion, and you gain the ability to jump from galaxy to galaxy, from dimension to dimension, all in the guise of your favorite hero.

You play a video game and take a more active part, in a sense, choosing the actions and adopting the roles of the characters on the screen. Of course, there are more limitations, since you tie yourself to one scenario — the one programmed into the game. But still you leap into the realm of your own imagination.

This has been going on for years. Our ancestors told tales around campfires, and found themselves adventuring alongside the gods. Our parents and grandparents supplied *all* of the images when they joined the Shadow as he fought crime on the radio and in the pulps. They, too, were artists of the imagination.

Your imagination is your super power. It takes you anywhere and everywhere, allows you to do anything and everything you want to do. Next to you, Galactus is a girl scout, and the Juggernaut is a 98 pound weakling. Not bad.

But you have to spend your time in the Danger Room, honing your abilities, making sure you are the best at what you do. This means sharpening your imagination at every opportunity. And when you train, you have to be ready for any and every scenario.

Play the video games for the moment that you may be trapped in an arcade with a worthy opponent. Read the comic books so that you can be a part of the group that defeats Magneto, should he return to threaten mankind. And read books to stay in top form should your favorite detective need help with a particularly vicious leg breaker, your favorite starship captain run into a malevolent alien race, and should dragons invade (or rescue) the local village.

Where else can you have this much fun staying in shape?

Enjoy.

— Steve

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Up Front

BIG FUN ON MONSTER ISLAND

Evan Skolnick, editor of the 1993 MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL, was sitting in his office one day thinking about a beautiful, bikini-clad blonde. However, the bathing beauty Evan had in mind was not a professional model but Dawn Geiger, the graphic designer of the June-release magazine spectacular.

Some months back, Evan developed an ad for the 1992 MARVEL YEAR IN REVIEW that featured Stan Lee. For the SWIMSUIT SPECIAL he wanted to do another ad focusing on someone associated with Marvel. "I was thinking about who could be in it," Evan explained, "when it struck me — Dawn! I know Dawn, she looks great, and she's not exactly shy." After Evan ran his idea by Marvel's advertising department (who "loved it"), he approached Dawn. "I thought it was a great idea," Dawn joked. "They should have done it years ago!"

Photo by Thomas Caggiano

A professional photographer was hired to shoot the ad that will appear in industry publications *Comic Buyer's Guide*, *Wizard* and *Comic Shop News*. It's also offered as a "co-op" ad that comic retailers may use to advertise their stores; so this ad could pop up in newspapers all over the country. "It's not a fake, it's not a trick," Evan stressed, "it really is Dawn and she really is the designer."

"I had fun doing it," Dawn added. "I'd like to do more."

The $4.50 SWIMSUIT SPECIAL offers more than 40 pinups and several advertising parodies. The roster of pinup artists includes Joe Jusko (who will do a cover painting of Rogue), Art Thibert, Ron Lim, Rick Leonardi, Tom Raney, Adam Hughes and George Perez. The theme is "Big Fun On Monster Island." Shortly after the Infinity War, Pip the Troll decided to celebrate the Infinity Watch's victory by using the Infinity Gems' immeasurable power to throw a beach party. Everybody in the Marvel Universe (including the 2099 universe) is "invited" to Monster Island for fun in the sun. Another added feature is one very special layout — an *au natural* shot of a major Marvel hero. Who is it? Sorry, but all Evan would say is that it's definitely not Dawn.

PIN IT ON THE X-MEN

During the next six months, Marvel and Planet Studios will celebrate the X-Men's 30th anniversary with the release of high quality, limited editon X-Men collector pin sets. Each set will consist of three different X-Men and the first set, on sale in May, will contain Wolverine, Cyclops and Gambit. Characters available in subsequent sets will include Cable, Magneto, Rogue, Sabretooth, Bishop, Psylocke, and Havok. Some pins will be made from reproductions of the holograms gracing the covers of this summer's X-Men books (for more details on the holograms see MARVEL AGE #127).

The pins are designed by the New Mexico based Planet Studios. They are a Marvel "licensee," which means that Marvel has awarded them the license to design pins using Marvel character likenesses. Since 1987, Planet Studios has designed around 300 pins for Marvel. In addition to the X-Men, they're currently working on new designs for Ghost Rider, Spider-Man, Carnage and the Silver Surfer. Their job is to adapt Marvel character art to pins that measure about 1 1/4" while remaining true to the detail, color and excitement of the original artwork.

Pins are created from the molds by transferring the artwork onto metal blanks. Each pin is then painstakingly colored by hand using paintbrushes, tweezers, and syringes (for the really tiny areas). The colored pins are then oven fired to cure the enamel paint and form a durable finish. Finally, the pins are electroplated and polished to a brilliant sheen.

These limited edition boxed sets will be available to collectors through comic shops, and only 2,500 to 3,000 of each collection will be produced.

THE SECOND RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS

Coinciding with next month's Midnight Sons crossover, "Midnight Massacre," two new related projects will be released: the 224-page MIDNIGHT SONS trade paperback and the five issue limited series MORBIUS REVISITED.

The MIDNIGHT SONS trade paperback re-presents last year's six part "Rise of the Midnight Sons" crossover. This paperback collection includes the first issues of GHOST RIDER/BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE, MORBIUS, NIGHTSTALKERS and DARKHOLD, two issues of GHOST RIDER, and reproductions of the Midnight Sons posters that were originally included with each. The $19.95 anthology also features Marvel's first fold-out dust jacket cover with an embossed gold foil logo. Drawn by the new GHOST RIDER team of penciler Ron Garney (NIGHTSTALKERS) and inker Chris Ivy (DAREDEVIL), the cover offers an added bonus on the inside: an excerpt from the MARVEL AGE #115 article explaining how this new line of books came about.

MORBIUS REVISITED re-presents ADVENTURES INTO FEAR #27-31. This classic horror tale of the Living Vampire features the combined talents of such Marvel greats as Doug Moench, Bill Mantlo, Paul Gulacy, Don Heck and Bob McCleod. The $1.95 premiere issue features a new cover by Gary Barker (INCREDIBLE HULK) and Jimmy Palmiotti (PUNISHER 2099).

Meanwhile, in *this* month's MIDNIGHT SONS UNLIMITED, Bart Sears will pencil a nine-page Mort Todd "Ghost Rider" tale inked by Jimmy Palmiotti. Mort also provides the "Morbius" lead tale illustrated by Rurik Tyler and Malcolm Jones III.

SUMMER TIME AND THE KILLING IS EASY

This year's PUNISHER SUMMER SPECIAL boasts 48 ad-free pages, three new stories and a painted cover. The three tales written by Pat Mills/Tony Skinner (PUNISHER 2099), Chuck Dixon (PUNISHER WAR ZONE) and Steven Grant (PUNISHER), have the unique distinction of being drawn exclusively by artists who work out of Gaijin Studios.

An art studio is simply a place where several different artists work. Many artists prefer this to working alone because it gives them the opportunity to learn and get valuable criticism from their peers. Operating out of the Atlanta based Gaijin Studios are Brian Stelfreeze (who painted the cover), Tony Harris, Joe Phillips, Jason Pearson, and Craig Hamilton, with other Gaijin artists. They will jointly pencil and ink the $2.50 special.

Last month the Gaijin gang produced the NAMOR ANNUAL. However, PUNISHER SUMMER SPECIAL Assistant Editor, Tim Tuohy, wished to publicly state, "I had the idea a year ago, but they beat me to it!"

DEADPOOL: "DAT BAD BOY'S DA JOINT!"

X-Force's arch-enemy, the masked mutant known as Deadpool, gets exposed this June in the DEADPOOL limited series written by Fabian Nicieza (X-MEN, X-FORCE), penciled by Joe Madureira, and inked by Mark Farmer (both from EXCALIBUR). The $2.50 premiere of this four issue limited series features a unique embossed/debossed cover. Debossing is similar to embossing only in the opposite direction; instead of raising the image toward the reader, the image is recessed away from him. The cover of DEADPOOL #1 combines the two processes to create a greater depth of field. The effect is further enhanced through the use of eye-catching red metallic ink.

The series focuses on the relationship between Deadpool, Weapon X (Kane) and the new character Slayback. All veterans of the top secret Weapon X program, the three mutants find themselves competing for the location of the mysterious "prize" mentioned in Mr. Tolliver's will. "There's lots of cool stuff," said Editor Suzanne Gaffney, ". . .more about the Weapon X program, Deadpool's relationship with his girlfriend Vanessa, a re-vamp of Black Tom Cassidy and lots of heavy duty Deadpool wisecracking action." Summing up Deadpool's radical appeal, Suzanne noted, "Dat bad boy's da joint!"

THE PHANTOM RIDER RIDES AGAIN

Some fans of THE ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER may be surprised to discover that the five-page Phantom Rider back-up tales of Marvel's wild west hero are brand new stories.

"They look and feel so much like the old 1960's Phantom Rider westerns that a lot of people think they are," said Editor Evan Skolnick. The confusion is due to the fact that the all-new adventures of the mysterious gunslinger are penciled and inked by the same artist who brought the Phantom Rider to life (as the *original* original Ghost Rider) 30 years ago, Dick Ayers. That, combined with writer Dan (REN & STIMPY) Slott's knack for capturing the narrative style associated with the classic era of western comics, has made the serialized sagas Marvel's best kept secret.

This month kicks off a special eight-part storyline which takes the mysterious six-gun shooter south of the border, to reveal his true origin. Evan hopes this will help stimulate interest. As he explained, "We're trying to get the word out that when you buy the ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER, not only do you get a great old Johnny Blaze story, but a great new Phantom Rider story as well!"

– *Matt Morra*

Mark's REMARKS

This is the tale of two characters. Both originated somewhere in my creative imagination. One is good, one evil. One has been handled by a number of writers, including myself, one has essentially been written by just me. Both are currently on view in the U.S.AGENT limited series, the first issue of which is on sale now. But I write about them here not so much to promote the series as to discuss how writers shape the lives of Marvel's characters.

The two are U.S.Agent and the Scourge of the Underworld, the latter of whom is actually a series of persons undertaking the exact same identity, mission, and mode of operations.

. . .I wanted to have a character that embodied Cap's flip side.

Let's begin with U.S.Agent. When, in the pages of CAPTAIN AMERICA, I introduced the character who would become the Agent, I did not know what course his life would take. All I knew was that I wanted to introduce a character who represented the dark side of patriotism, to serve as an ideological enemy to Cap. My thinking was that, since Cap was a good guy and Cap was a patriot, people might conclude that the underlying theme of the book was that patriotism equals good. Actually, I believe that patriotism can be used to motivate good things and bad things both, so I wanted to have a character that embodied Cap's flip side.

Thus, John Walker the Super-Patriot sprang forth, using patriotism as some Americans do — as an excuse to feel superior to foreigners — and interpreting the American Dream as some Americans do — bettering one's lot in life by making lots of money. He saw beating Cap at the patriotism game was his ticket to fame and fortune, and set out to do just that.

At this point, I had intended to keep Walker as the Super-Patriot indefinitely, but when I embarked upon my infamous "Cap quits" storyline, I needed a replacement for Cap and figured, why not Walker? It would be a good way to contrast further the two brands of patriotism that he and Cap embody. So he became Captain America for a while. Again, I did not know exactly what Walker's final disposition would be; all I knew was that I was going to keep him as Cap long enough to milk all of the potential I could out of the situation. Readers hated him at first and many predicted he would die (the fate of many a past would-be Cap), so I was determined to do two things: find a way to make him sympathetic, and not kill him off, no matter what.

Two years later, after acquiescing to popular demand and bringing the original Cap back, I decided that Walker had too much potential to put him into mothballs, so I gave him the cool suit Tom Morgan designed as Cap's non-Cap costume, and came up with the name U.S.Agent. I had no immediate plans for John Walker at this point (I figured the original Cap had shared the stage with his doppelganger long enough), so when John Byrne asked to induct him into the Avengers West Coast, I said "sure."

Up to this point, I was the only one to have written Walker, and in the course of developing the character I had taken him from an egotistical, jingoistic Cap-hating smart-mouth vigilante-patriot to a tortured, introspective, Cap-respecting soldier-patriot. Subsequent writers would have a wide assortment of character traits to choose from when searching for their own take on John Walker. Mr. Byrne elected to emphasize the tortured part (having Walker refuse to acknowledge that his parents were dead) and the smart-mouth part (being a general nuisance to his fellow Avengers). Subsequent writers (notably Fabian Nicieza in AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT and Roy Thomas in AVENGERS WEST COAST) have had their own approaches to the character, equally as valid as mine and well suited to the stories in which they featured the Agent.

Readers hated him at first and many predicted he would die. . .

The point is that the character was no longer just mine. Four people had now left their marks (ulp) on the Agent's personality. Some approaches were more in sync with mine than others, but the matter was out of my hands. In a shared universe like Marvel's, all characters eventually become community property.

For contrast let's consider Scourge, a character concept that I came up with (though John Byrne did the costume design) and wrote all of his major appearances. The impetus for creating Scourge was another Marvel character, Arcade. Arcade called himself a master assassin who never bungled a hit (until he met Spider-Man and the X-Men) and yet no one could ever name one person he ever assassinated. I thought, "How about an assassin who *did* eliminate characters we've heard of before and, while I'm at it, maybe some characters that various creative teams felt were bankrupt of further potential?"

So I concocted a storyline wherein Marvel's most wretched villains were eliminated by a master of disguise with an armor-piercing gun that went "Pum Spak," and who would utter "Justice is served!" after every hit. In an unheralded display of line unity, many of my fellow writers agreed to pitch in and provide a Scourge elimination in their own titles, promoting the idea that Scourge could pop up anywhere, as anything, and do his dirty business.

It's gratifying to resolve something I set in motion eight years ago.

While my cohorts were contributing Scourge sightings, none were developing or advancing Scourge's characterization, leaving that task to me. Finally, at the beginning of my second year scripting CAP, I wrote the finale to the original Scourge arc, revealing him to be the brother of the first super-villain Scourge had offed. My twist ending, however, had Scourge himself get shot by someone with an identical modus operandi. The implications then were that there has been more than one Scourge in operation, and maybe the origin story Scourge told Cap was a lie.

I brought back Scourge about two years later in order to eliminate a Red Skull impostor, and a few issues after that to eradicate the Watchdog who supposedly killed John Walker. These were essentially cameos. Finally, I brought him back for a bi-weekly back-up feature and pit'ed him against my other creation, U.S.Agent. At the end of that storyline, Scourge was about to give another scurrilous account of his origin when he, like his predecessor, was shot by still another copycat killer. The implications — same as the first time around. In a story two years later, this third Scourge was revealed to be an employee of the Red Skull.

Which brings us to the present. In the U.S.AGENT limited series, I resolve the multiple Scourge storyline once and for all. I take the various strands of information I've established over the years and weave them together into what I hope is a satisfying, all-questions-answered, dramatic resolution. It's gratifying to resolve something I set in motion eight years ago, just the way I want to, not having to account for anyone else's "contribution." Now, at least, if a reader thinks the whole thing was a big yawn, I have only myself to hold responsible.

It's rare when one writer gets to handle a character from cradle to grave. And sometimes a character is all the greater from having a number of minds inform his life experiences. The best characters in the Marvel Universe resonate on a number of levels, attracting different writers to them, each of whom has a specific insight into and approach for the character. I would hate to be limited to writing characters of my own invention, and part of the fun of writing in a shared universe is that I don't have to be.

– Mark Gruenwald

THE BOSSMEN

by RICK PARKER

YOU'RE CRAZY, MARK! ONE ERIC FEIN IS BETTER THAN TWO BOB HARRAS'S ANYDAY.
MR BIG
OKAY... LISTEN... I'M WILLING TO GET RID OF MORT TODD.
... AND THE LAST THING I NEED IS ANOTHER DANNY FINGEROTH.
IN FACT, I DON'T NEED THIS FABIAN NICIEZA, EITHER! I'M SICK OF SEEIN' HIS FACE!
C'MON, MARK... IS IT A DEAL...? I'LL EVEN THROW IN TWO DON DALEYS FOR YA RALPH MACCHIO!
© RICK PARKER

Razo

In Hollywood, getting name-above-the-title billing means that you've arrived, that you're a creative force of note. But writer and director Clive Barker has long since made his mark on Hollywood. So when the British horrorist voiced interest in developing a family of super-hero titles for Marvel Comics, editors here realized name above title alone wouldn't do. No, nothing short of christening an entire universe after the man could adequately signify the bold new creative era which was dawning. Welcome to the Barkerverse. Welcome to the Razorline.

The Razorline titles are set among Barker's framework of the "Decamundi," ten dimension-worlds among which the Earth is precariously centered. Barker's heroes — HYPERKIND, ECTOKID, HOKUM & HEX, and SAINT SINNER — take full advantage of the multi-faceted universe in which their bizarre dramas unfold.

MA: What was the appeal of creating the more mainstream, hero-oriented comics material readers will find in the Razorline books as opposed to, say, HELLRAISER or NIGHTBREED?

CB: Well, part of it goes back to my childhood, back to reading classic Jack Kirby-Stan Lee FANTASTIC FOUR s in my early adolescence, and finding that my head would be full of these images when I went to sleep at night. Finding those formulations — and they were formulations of old stories; I mean Stan Lee is the first one to tell you his greatest inspiration is Shakespeare, he literally says that — finding those formulations of stories of deceit and violence and love and so on laid out in super hero terms was completely fascinating, completely mesmeric.

"...my head would be full of these images when I went to sleep at night."

I love the simplicity of the format. . .They're a cheap form of entertainment produced with a populist energy, and I like that. It's very unpretentious. And comics manage to be this wonderful mingling of things which remain in your subconscious — they sort of go straight to the gut. And when they work well — I'm thinking now of something like the Spider-Man mythology, or the Fantastic Four mythology, or Superman — they do by-pass everything and go straight to your subconscious.

MA: How did you come up with the ideas for the various characters and premises of the four Razorline titles?

orline

An interview with Clive Barker

CB: I wanted to do a super hero comic, something which would be my take on what super heroes were going to be like in the '90s. . . HYPERKIND fell into that category. I wanted to do something that was magical and mystical in the way that DOCTOR STRANGE was and still is. DOCTOR STRANGE was on of my favorite comics from when I was a kid. So I suppose HOKUM & HEX is my take on that. ECTOKID, which is perhaps the second weirdest of the bunch, is a kind of dream story for the 15-year-old that's still alive to me — the tale of an adolescent who lives in two worlds and has access to a whole other sphere of reality. And SAINT SINNER is just a wild one, the series which hopefully will press the limits of what comics can do.

Elaine Lee, who's writing SAINT SINNER, is an extraordinary imaginer. There seems to be a marriage of minds there, because she's really got a take on this material which I love. So each of these books hopefully offers a different kind of pleasure. And the thrill of doing all four, and hopefully doing more in the course of time, is that you are creating a kind of "mini-universe," the Marvel Universe of course being well-established over a period of many decades. I'm universe-creating in my novels all the time — in *Imajica*, I've created a whole series of worlds and rules and species and so on which are unique to that book, the same with *Weaveworld*. I thought it was time to try it in comics.

MA: Are there any particular writing challenges you've found to be unique to comics?

CB: Oh, yeah. The prime thing that's unique to comics is that you've got these small modules of storytelling, much smaller than a novel. *Imajica* is 850 pages long, *Weaveworld* is 700 pages. . .even a movie is two hours of establishing delivery and narrative. The way a mythology is created in comic books is much closer to the way a coral reef is constructed. There's an accrual of detail over a period of many weeks, months, years. So that if you were to actually summarize the adventures of personal problems of the Fantastic Four, you have decades of encounters — all of which are 20 pages long, most of which are self-contained — to construct this history from. They are linear, but they're linear in very short bytes. So, as I say, in FANTASTIC FOUR there are 300 separate, linear bytes.

It's a very different way of establishing the rules and textures. I enjoy that hugely — I think it's a whole other kind of narrative challenge. And of course this is part of the great fun of these projects — you're dealing with other talents who have other missions and whose contribution is ultimately going to be more important than mine. I mean, I'm writing the "Bible," I'm writing the underlying rules, I'm creating the characters, but it's the artist and the writer who, on an issue-by-issue, series-by-series basis, will finally shape how people perceive these things. So it really is completely collaborative. Novels of course are this sort of ego ride — you sit there and you write the stuff and nobody touches you.

". . .SAINT SINNER is just a wild one, the series which hopefully will press the limits of what

MA: Do you see the Razorline project as something that rounds out the process of getting your artistic vision across?

CB: While I'm always looking for somebody who will give me a platform in which to lay out my concerns and the texture of my imagination, there are things you can do in comics which you can do nowhere else. There's a scale of spectacle in comics which you can achieve in movies only if you have Jim Cameron budgets. There's a wonderfully casual sense of the imagination at work — worlds are regularly destroyed, galaxies are traversed in the space of a panel, deities the size of small cosmos arise and fall in 20 pages. I love that sense of the impossible being not only likely, but a necessity, on a page-by-page basis. I think it's part of the fun of the medium.

There are certain ideas that I have — and I think these four [Razorline] notions fall into that category — which cry out for treatment in comics. And I'm sure as my career goes on there will be many more of them. I'm a great comics reader, always have been. Great comics can be great art, no doubt about it. Great storytelling, great visuals. . . they can make a mark on our subconscious which later media, whether it be a Tim Burton movie or a Saturday morning cartoon, can only echo. It seems to me there's a way that comics touch our imagination which is unique. And I completely want to be in that business, because my entire emotional and professional life is built around passing my imagination on to other people in as many forms as possible, as intensely as possible.

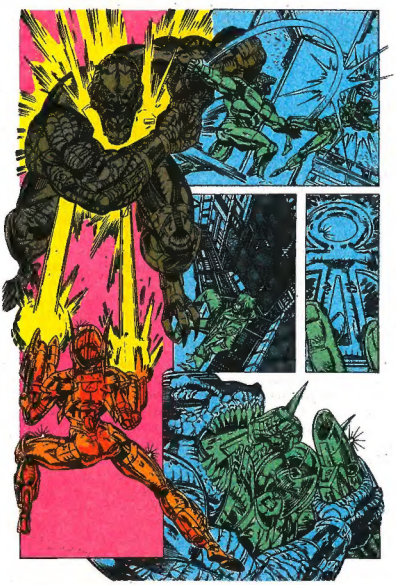
Into the "Barkerverse"

Like all truly momentous celestial phenomena, the birth of a comics universe is a rarity. In the three decades since the "big bang" of the Marvel Universe, there's been little to match it. But a rarity is precisely what the Razorline "Barkerverse" promises to be. Dig just below the surface, and the Barkerverse launch is surprisingly reminiscent of the early days of the Marvel Age. Like Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, and the Marvel Universe's other pioneers, the writers and artists enlisted to give life to Clive Barker's sprawling super-hero vision are charting new territory — and perhaps, unknowingly, the next great sphere of comic book "reality."

"...my entire emotional and professional life is built around passing my imagination on to other people in as many forms as possible, as intensely as possible."

What they're serving up is, without question, radical: a never-before-seen melding of explosive Marvel action and Clive Barker's fantasy. The end product is so unique, Razorline Editor Marc McLaurin noted, Marvel was compelled to establish the new imprint to give the book a suitable home.

As the quartet of monthly books — HYPERKIND, ECTOKID, HOKUM & HEX, and SAINT SINNER — were being geared up for summer kickoff, their writers reflected on the fascinating variations in action and theme. (The titles will debut over four consecutive weeks in late June-early July, with a special 50 cent preview — RAZORLINE: THE FIRST CUT — set to appear at the same time.)



HYPERKIND

"Comics have been very dark lately, and that's fine, but fighting darkness is what HYPERKIND is all about," said writer Fred Burke (*Miracle Man*). In a word, then, "idealism" is what's going to inject the "hyper" into HYPERKIND, as Burke, penciler Paris Cullins *(Wonder Woman, New Gods)*, and inker Bob Petrecca (DOCTOR STRANGE) develop their youthful super squad as Clinton-era dreamers bent on changing the world, despite "Earth Barker's" apathetic disbelief in heroes.

In the very first issue, the creative team chronicles not only Hyperkind's origin, but also the rise and tragic fall of their morally weaker predecessors. "There's a very complex and rich back story there, one which I hope is going to give this series a long life," Burke said.

The lineup of heroes includes a Beverly Hills teen and movie industry brat Lisa Moffitt, jock Kenny Zambetti, sexually abused runaway-turned-stripper Dyan Divine, and withdrawn high schooler George Yoneda. The four are forever changed when they stumble upon one of the Paxis — a group of disgraced heroes of old — who offers them access to a set of mysterious "power sarcophagi."

Impulsively, they accept, and emerge from the power pods, reborn. Lisa has become Armata, "a one-woman weapons team," with high-tech military hardware for limbs; slow-witted Kenny is now Logix, able to slip into the abstract form of binary code and manipulate computer networks and communications systems; routinely leered-at Dyan can now turn the tables as Bliss, a dream weaver with absolute control over people's fantasies, and their darkest nightmares; and George has found identity as Amokk, a 400-pound bonecrusher with heightened senses, hands replaced by fearsome slicing and bludgeoning instruments, and the power of instinctual, often animalistic response.

These are the Neo-Paxis or, as they'll be more commonly known, the Hyperkind.

Having grown up in the shadow of the L.A. riots and countless other social travesties, the group is acutely aware that all is far from right with the world, and that they've been given an enormous opportunity to help. "When you press their idealism button, each of them has things they really want to do because of their various backgrounds," Burke explained. "They want to deal with homelessness, sex abuse, hunger, drugs, and crime."

Still, the writer said, it won't be easy. "Part of what they're going to discover is, just because you're not a powerless teenager anymore does not automatically make you capable of solving all the world's problems."

In the book's opening story arc, the team is violently challenged by a reptilian creature called Thermakk, the same seemingly benevolent alien who empowered the original Paxis. Having witnessed Paxis's fall from grace, Thermakk has decided his energizing pods would better serve another world, and means to have them back at any cost.

More insidious is the threat of Paragon John, a media baron wildly bitter over his exclusion from the first Paxis. John has spent years devoting all his vast resources to ruining the once-idolized freedom fighters and eradicating their memory. He's applied his scientific prowess toward lacing major water supplies with brainwashing drugs, dispatching his personal army to round up those who proved immune, all in a successful effort to convince the public that super heroes are a hoax.

Predictably, Hyperkind's arrival on the scene leaves him more than a little miffed.

"The villains in HYPERKIND are very cynical — you've got this media mogul brainwashing everybody into the hopeless belief that there are no heroes," Burke said. But he added, "I want HYPERKIND to be the bang-up, high action entry into the Barkerverse. This is not a cynical book."

ECTOKID

"The Ectosphere is not eternity — I picture it more as this metaphysical bus station," writer Larry Wachowski (CLIVE BARKER'S BOOK OF THE DAMNED) said, summing up one of the two locales of ECTOKID. "It's a place for people who never finished their business in our world, so they're still attached to the land of the living. You'll see Kennedy chatting away with Oswald in the background."

ECTOKID is 14-year-old Dex Mungo, a New Orleans street youth who was fathered by a ghost, giving him the unsettling ability to step into the hereafter virtually at will. A mixed curse, Dex's unique physiology makes him the target of an oppressive clerical-political conglomerate in this world, and of a horde of supernatural menaces in the next. (Chief among these are the demonic Incubi, characterized by Wachowski as "the karmic gristle that accumulates in the cosmic drain.")

"You'll see Kennedy chatting away with Oswald in the background."

At the outset, Dex is unaware of his unique nature. In fact, his frenetically paced debut is essentially one long double-take, as his previously dormant power suddenly manifests itself. Writer James Robinson (who is handing the reins to Wachowski after ECTOKID #3), penciler Steve Skroce, and inker Bob Dvorak *(Aquaman, Deadstar)* don't lift their hero's fog until the second issue, when Dex is summoned to his deranged mother's asylum, and the mystery of his origin unravels.

Armed with new awareness, Dex embarks on a quest to find his father, in life a scientist whose masterwork invention, the Aurat, was a secret gateway to the Ectosphere. The search will span several issues in which he'll share adventures with Cyrano de Bergerac and Edgar Allan Poe, get busted by the Ectosphere's "spook police," and find himself hunted by the Brothers Augustine, psychic assassins recruited by the quasi-governmental Expurgatorius to capture the Aurat.

ECTOKID's early storyline will include an over-the-top crossover with SAINT SINNER, in which the two Barkerverse counterparts. . . blow a few quarters at a carnival of the dead. (They'll also tangle with the carny's crooked owner, Mr. Fingers, an ectoplasm-gorging baddie who fills and subsequently spills his gut.) On a more subtle note, as the two young heroes bond, they'll realize how much they've *lost* for want of normalcy — normal teen years spent with normal families in normal homes. The theme will resurface periodically in ECTOKID.

"We're going to explore the idea that Dex is homeless and doesn't have a real family," Wachowski said. "And yet, when he has a family actually start to come together, he's like, 'Whoa, I'm not sure I'm into this. I'm on my own — I'm a man.' So when *do* you become a man? It's hard to say."

HOKUM & HEX

"Two gags and a beheading — that's what we've got in the first HOKUM & HEX story," said writer Frank Lovece (ATOMIC AGE), touching on the bizarre mix of action and the absurd in this saga of a stand-up comic-cum-planetary guardian.

Seinfeld this guy's *not*. A loser at comedy and at love, Trip Munroe trudges into the plotline having just suffered a kiss-off from his fiancee that would have made a "Dear John" letter seem positively kind. He's rapidly approaching bottom when his luck changes.

Not necessarily for the better — it just changes.

Somewhere in the nether reaches of the Barkerverse, it seems, dimensional warlord Godkin Straith has put up the Earth in a cosmic game of chance with evil demi-god Felon Bale — and Straith lost. Under the rules of the contest, the losing party can randomly empower a mortal, giving the doomed planet one final hope of salvation.

Unwittingly, then, Trip is zapped with sweeping matter-transforming abilities. All of a sudden, for a person who's used to making light of the world's foibles, things get pretty heavy.

Thanks to Lovece, penciler Anthony Williams, and inker Andy Lanning, Felon Bale wastes no time in claiming his prize. By the end of the first issue, New York is ready to be overrun by the maniacal god's Corpii warriors — "vicious, elite, otherworldly stormtroopers who happen to be extremely polite," Lovece said — and they all want a piece of Trip, literally. When Trip's hit-or-miss hexes somehow pull him through, the enraged villain empowers his own champion, Bloodshed, to slice-and-dice the beleaguered hero. Given that Bloodshed's mortal resumé boasts a lengthy stint as a serial killer, there's an excellent chance he'll do just that.

"[Corpii warriors are] vicious, elite, otherworldly stormtroopers who happen to be extremely polite."

"Who knows, I may just kill Trip — nobody said I couldn't," Lovece remarked, feigning a moment of creative madness. "Remember, this is a universe where dead people go on to inhabit the Ectosphere."

Wary of Trip's powers and the danger that always seems to follow on his heels the NYPD organizes a special task force to take him down. Meanwhile, an Amazonian bounty hunter named Wrath decides to make Trip her next assignment, for no other reason than to revel in the exhilaration of throttling a super hero. And Trip will team up with the Hyperkind to try to contain an over-the-hill hero gone off the beam.

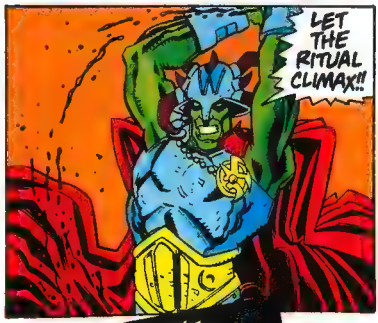
"Through all these insane circumstances, humor is the only thing keeping Trip sane," Lovece concluded.

SAINT SINNER

"Saint Sinner answers people's prayers, and those prayers can be a bridge between dimensions," said writer Elaine Lee (STARSTRUCK), offering a glimpse of her storyline's dizzying, religion-steeped canvas. Perhaps the most enigmatically surreal of the Barkerverse's myriad exotic characters, Saint Sinner is as much a victim as he is a savior.

Sixteen-year-old Philip Fetter has been possessed by the satanic demon Runesmith and driven to a series of grisly murders. Philip summons the will to resist when commanded to kill his parents, and he attempts to liberate his soul by drowning himself. Pulled from the watery depths by an angel, the stricken teen is then compelled to slay her, which he does, but this Samaritan remains alive in spirit, staking her own claim to Philip's

YOU ARE NOW A SACRED PART OF "THE RESOLUTION." YOU ARE HONORED. YOU ARE JOY AND ECSTASY INCARNATE!
LET THE RITUAL CLIMAX, LET THE RITUAL CLIMAX!



Leave, angel! The boy is mine! There's not room on this soil for the three of us!
You're wrong, demon! You crowd the boy out. I make space so he may live between us.
It is you who are mine now, demon.
Help me, my brothers! Soulsmith! Clocksmith! Blacksmith!

mind and locking Runesmith inside with her. Their heated psychic conflict stirs extraordinary power, giving rise, ultimately, to Saint Sinner.

Almost immediately, Saint Sinner is imprisoned in the eerie horrorscape of the Amen, where he is trapped for almost a decade, and where he meets strange creatures who will become his most valued companions.

Although Lee originally planned to recount this involved history gradually, she came to the realization the SAINT SINNER's characters "are too weird not to have an origin story." This change of direction meshed perfectly with the avant-garde penchants of artist Max Douglas (NIGHTBREED). Inspired, Douglas shifted gears for a portion of the preview story, concisely presenting Philip's tale through captivating illuminated manuscript stylings.

Douglas stands to have many such envelope-pushing opportunities. Of all the Barkerverse titles, SAINT SINNER takes fullest narrative advantage of Clive Barker's "Decamundi." Portals between the dimensions are readily available to him, and Saint Sinner at various points phases through stained glass windows, Navaho sand paintings, computer monitors — "anything that's sort of a mandala," Lee said, referring to the religious mosaics prominent in the Hindu and Buddhist faiths.

Never far from the hero's side is a trio of bizarre mystical allies. This supporting cast is headed by Kento Canto, the Interdimensional Acrobat, whose chronic intangibility Douglas will illustrate with computer-enhanced imagery. Even more odd is Bull Baby, a warped hybrid of both, whose great power is subject to all of an infant's temperament and amoral lack of restraint. And there's Mishmash the Collage Woman, whose dubious gift of random absorption means that readers may see her "with hair that's made of eels, or a rat's snout poking out of her throat," according to Lee. "But weirdly, she's still the babe of the book."

Their heated psychic conflict stirs extraordinary power, giving rise, ultimately, to Saint Sinner.

Following the group's jailbreak from the Amen, Saint Sinner returns to Earth to find he no longer had a place there — at least not until he attains some control over his inner volatility. So his companions conjure up the Vertesque, a timeless jungle dimension where the tortured hero can mature and the book's principal off-Earth venue. And it will be revealed that Kento Canto has already prepared for his comrade's eventual homecoming by sowing the legend of Saint Sinner throughout the ages: for, to vanquish Runesmith, Saint Sinner will need the might reaped from the worship of generations.

The entity that was once Philip Fetter wears the mantle of religious icon uncomfortably. In an anticipated ECTOKID crossover, when his soul is jarred from his body back into his stolen youth, he'll even consider abandoning his Saint Sinner persona altogether. After all, Lee sympathized, being the patron saint of lost souls is a calling taxing beyond comprehension.

"If a young, morbid teenager's worst horror fantasy came true, that would be what happens to this boy."

– *Tom Russo*

An In-Depth Look at the Venom/Punisher Match-up

JUMP INTO THE PYRE

The truly jaded will point to it as obvious. A pair of Marvel's biggest guns —dark heroes with attitude problems—meeting in a slam-bang, hell-bent-for action, limited series, chock-a-block full of pathos and violence. This three-issue limited series VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE, due to begin in June, is just the kind of thing the fans will eat up. The series is being penned by veteran PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL scribe Carl Potts, who plans on making it more than raking claws and flying bullets.

"Punisher and Venom are both obsessed personalities who believe their lot in life is to protect innocents. They're able to rationalize their extreme and sometimes hypocritical actions because they view the protection of innocents as the top priority. Venom and Punisher operate slightly differently, and I think most people would agree that Venom is actually more outright psychotic than Castle is—although Castle certainly isn't the model of mental stability." Potts went on to state that, as Venom, Eddie Brock's physical abilities obviously totally out-match the Punisher's, whereas the Punisher's access to high-tech firepower pretty much strikes a balance between them.

...Venom is actually more outright psychotic than Castle...

"One thing I try to do is show the internal logic, reasonings, and contradictions of the characters—as opposed to just showing their external actions," Potts said. Still, Potts was quick to point out that, while he likes to internalize the main characters' motivations, this wasn't a "talking heads" series. "There's a lot of external action going on here, but it stems from the internal workings and conflicts in Venom and Punisher."

Potts pointed out that, as is quite often the case in real life, people who are just slightly different from each other often become greater enemies than people who are vastly different. He pointed to examples in both the Moslem and Christian religions, where different branches were often at each other's throats; Sunni and Shiite Moslems often clash in the Mid-East, while in Northern Ireland, Protestants and Catholics are in conflict.

The specific conflict in the series revolves around an investigative reporter who goes under deep cover to write a story on a very violent Oakland, CA, street gang and, much against his will, gets caught up in the urban violence. The gang has usurped an abandoned warehouse that, unbeknownst to them, was used to house a secret Hydra experimental research facility. The reporter has uncovered information on the old Hydra base and figures that he can win awards by writing about it. However, the only way to get into the base is to go through the gang.

So the reporter concocts a scheme whereby he hires a couple of actors to rough up a gang member, allowing the reporter to come to the gang member's rescue, thus endearing the reporter to the gang. Once a gang member, he figures that he'll be able to get a closer look at the Hydra base. Only he didn't figure on the gang's initiation rite, which is to participate in a drive-by shooting within 24 hours. Horrified, the reporter tries to get out of the initiation, but is caught in his own web.

Venom gets word of the reporter's problem and feels an affinity with him because Brock used to be an investigative reporter. Further, Venom sees the reporter as another innocent victim who is being forced by gang members to either kill someone in a drive-by shooting or be killed himself. The action really heats up when Punisher, who happens to be in the region, gets wind of what's going on and decides to clean the area up.

In the Punisher's very black and white view of life, anyone involved in a gang deserves exactly what he gets. "There's not a lot of gray area for the Punisher," Potts said. "Whereas, Venom is trying to save someone who looks like a gang member and is inside the gang, but isn't really of the gang mentality." Thus Punisher and Venom come into conflict. This delays Venom from stopping the shooting, and the reporter blames Venom, causing Brock to experience deep pangs of guilt.

The reporter winds up involved with some of the machinery in the lab—high-tech equipment left over from Hydra's attempt to create a super soldier. The reporter is transformed into Pyre, a character able to transmit microwaves in much the same fashion as a microwave oven, which means he could literally cook somebody alive, as microwaves do, or if he was to direct his powers at a metallic object, it will heat up and create sparks—as would happen if metal was placed inside a microwave oven.

As can be expected, the reporter is not only very distraught, but angered and somewhat demented over not being rescued and having had to murder somebody against his will. He thus swears vengeance against Venom. When the Punisher launches an assault against the other two, the series really goes ballistic. Punisher believes Venom to be a menace because of prior atrocities, and likewise believes Pyre to be a gang member. Pyre not only wants Venom's hide, he must defend himself against Punisher. As for Venom, not only must he defend himself against the Punisher, but he feels guilty for letting the reporter down.

This sets up an interesting moral dilemma in Venom, because while Pyre is technically innocent of the drive-by and must be protected, he has also just become Venom's most deadly foe "So what is he going to do?" Potts asked.

Pyre could conceivably kill Venom.

"Feel guilt, admit he screwed up and created his own worst enemy, and let this enemy take him out? Or is he going to protect himself in which case he compounds his guilt because he'd be beating the life out of the person he helped create." All of which not only makes for some heavy-duty fireworks, it also makes for some interesting reading.

Penciling the series will be Tom Lyle, best known for his work over at DC on the *Batman* titles, and the *Robin* limited series, and inking will be by Joe Rubinstein.

Both Potts and Editor Danny Fingeroth are very excited about having Lyle on-board. According to Lyle, Fingeroth has been tempting Lyle with work for some time, and finally snagged him with a number of Spider-Man projects. "Danny has been trying to get me to work for Marvel for about three years. He'd offer me all sorts of projects and I'd make him nuts because I'd think about them for a while, and then turn him down at the last second. My contract with DC ended last August, and Danny gave me a pile of really neat stuff to do and I couldn't say 'no' to it."

Lyle's first project for Marvel was for the upcoming Amazing Spider-Man Annual, and he also contributed to the "Maximum Carnage" storyline running throughout the Spider-titles. Lyle admits being very intimidated by the Marvel characters at first. "I've been at DC for so long," Lyle said, "I'm just trying to hop on in and get used to them." Mostly though, Lyle is attempting to have fun with the Marvel heroes and villains. "Let me tell you, Spider-Man is intimidating to me, but Venom, since he's newer, he's not quite as intimidating. But it is hard to get used to drawing him because he's a stockier guy than average," he explained.

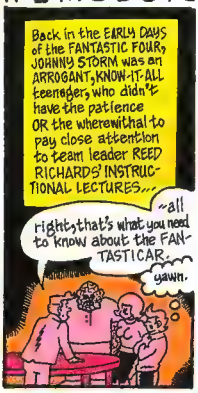
In spite of his initial trepidation, Lyle confesses to having the time of his life. "Frankly, I've been surprised at how enthusiastic I've been about doing Spider-Man, not because I don't like him, but because I haven't followed him for so long, I've been trying to keep up since I left DC. I've been having a good time with him." He then went on to say that he would eventually like to work on Daredevil, but given the amount of Spider-work Fingeroth has been giving him, that might be some time in coming, since Lyle will soon become the regular penciler of *Spider-Man*, joining GHOST RIDER writer Howard Mackie.

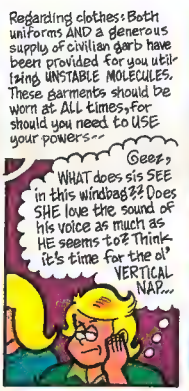
Lyle is quite pleased with his work on the "Maximum Carnage" storyline, but feels very strongly that VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE will really blow people away. For Potts the critical tension in the series revolves around Venom, and how the action affects his already unbalanced psyche, "The turning point for Venom is when he failed to protect an innocent who he pledged to protect. Through this failure Venom has created one of his worst enemies-one of the people who could hurt him the most." As Venom fans already know, one of Venom's few weaknesses is his vulnerability to heat/like microwaves. Therefore, Pyre could conceivably kill Venom.

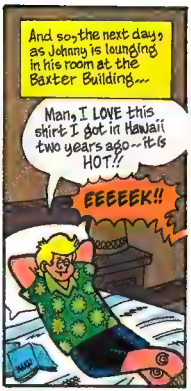
The first issue of VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE will feature a special cover enhancement. Editor Danny Fingeroth disclosed that the first issue's cover will show Venom and the Punisher leaping out at the reader, through a field of flame that will be treated with a special prismatic foil. Still, even without the special enhancement, Fingeroth believes that fans will really enjoy the series. He pointed out that Potts accurately contrasts Venom and Punisher's approaches to crime-fighting, and by pitting them against one another in this fashion Potts is essentially asking, "Are these guys fellow crime fighters, or lunatics?"

Such decisions will be entirely up to the readers, however, who will be able to determine the answer for themselves when the book hits the stands late in June, produced on the same high-gloss stock as the first VENOM: LETHAL PROTECTOR series and priced at $2.95.

- Robert Sodaro


Back in the EARLY DAYS of the FANTASTIC FOUR, JOHNNY STORM was an ARROGANT, KNOW-IT-ALL teenager, who didn't have the patience OR the wherewithal to pay close attention to team leader REED RICHARDS' INSTRUCTIONAL LECTURES...
~all right, that's what you need to know about the FANTASTICAR...
yawn.


Regarding clothes: Both uniforms AND a generous supply of civilian garb have been provided for you utilizing UNSTABLE MOLECULES. These garments should be worn at ALL times, for should you need to USE your powers--
Geez, WHAT does sis SEE in this windbag?? Does SHE love the sound of his voice as much as HE seems to? Think it's time for the ol' VERTICAL NAP...


And so, the next day, as Johnny is lounging in his room at the Baxter Building...
Man, I LOVE this shirt I got in Hawaii two years ago--it's HOT!!
EEEEEK!!

UH OH! Looks like it's time for the Human Torch to--
EEEEE--

--FLAME ON!!

EEE--ZZZ
Don't worry, ma'am, the Human Torch has the situation WELL IN HAND!

In the future, DO try to AVOID falling out of high rise buildings--I just might NOT be nearby NEXT time.

Thanks, Torch, but--
Something the matter?
Frankly, yall the HEAT you're giving off is making me UNCOMFORTABLE.

Simple enough to REMEDY--and, in the process, to give you a chance to see a bit MORE of the man who SAVED your life--Johnny Storm!
phew..
heh

--FLAME OFF!!

FEEL FEEL HK!

..I wasn't counting on seeing THIS much...
..urk ..maybe Reed was RIGHT about wearing those SPECIAL duds!?..
Hey, I thought the FLASHER was at that OTHER comics company?
Listening to your elders is a TOUGH lesson to swallow, but the Torch learned it in--
THE END!!

MARVEL FRONTIER COMICS

On being appointed Marvel UK Editor In Chief year before last, Paul Neary's initial aim was to publish a solid line of successful titles before expanding into more radical themes that have the potential to attract a wider audience. Having succeeded in the first phase with the likes of DEATH'S HEAD II and WILD THING, he will see the realisation of phase two of the Neary Master Plan when the new *Marvel Frontier Comics* imprint launches in July with BLOODSEED, DANCES WITH DEMONS, CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER and IMMORTALIS.

Group Editor Michael Bennent's background at Fleetway and Dark Horse involved overseeing shorter stories and serialisations for anthologies rather than continuity based titles, and the Marvel Frontier line returns him to similar territory. "Twenty-two pages a month can be a grueling schedule for an artist," he said, feeling the looser deadlines offered by limited series, combined with the more mature outlook of Frontier, made life more comfortable for creators. Neary agreed, and said, "We're at the point now where we can listen to people who don't want to do mainstream projects and offer them work on titles aimed at a slightly older age group."

The name occurred to them when Bennent appeared on a convention panel titled 'Britain — The Final Frontier,' and was reinforced when a Japanese magazine, the title of which translates as 'Manga Frontier,' was sent to the Marvel London offices. As for selecting the concepts, Paul Neary recognised certain ideas already in development would be stronger for being divorced from the familiar Marvel Universe, his own BLOODSEED script among them. Bennent felt that some ideas, such as the native American mythology in DANCES WITH DEMONS, suffered when forced into the context of the other Marvel UK titles. These philosophies firmly in hand, they readied a quartet of Marvel Frontier Comics limited series for a launch debut.

BLOODSEED

He may be Editor-In-Chief today, but Paul Neary's previous career covers most aspects of comics. He penciled CAPTAIN AMERICA, inked EXCALIBUR, and wrote and drew "The Madman" for *Warrior*. It's writing skills that Neary will apply to BLOODSEED; the title leading the Frontier Comics assault, and the origins of the feature have their foundations in *Hunter*, a strip Neary illustrated for the Warren Magazine EERIE almost twenty years ago. "Hunter was a barbarian existing in a world of ruined high-tech stuff," Neary recalled. "And I'd have liked to have developed that, but the writer had other ideas." Neary often returned to the concept of a barbarian utilising the discarded technology of a dead society, but it wasn't until DEATH'S HEAD II artist Liam Sharp expressed a desire to spread his wings that the concepts coalesced into BLOODSEED. "Liam has a soft spot for barbarians, and wanted to take time off from mainstream stuff," Neary said. "We were on the same wavelength with BLOODSEED, and the artwork

"Twenty-two pages a month can be a grueling schedule for an artist."

TM & © 1993 Marvel Comics, Ltd.

Liam's doing is beautiful because his heart's in it." The pencils are enhanced by inker Cam Smith, whose work also draws praise from Neary.

So who exactly is Bloodseed? It's an answer Neary won't divulge, as the story is set up as a mystery. When the series begins, Bloodseed awakens, buried in snow and knowing only that he has a message to deliver. This knowledge compels him to constantly keep moving and, when he deviates from his course, the environment reacts against him. He shares his world with talking pterodactyls and giant lizards, and it contains the technological debris of a past civilization. According to Neary, "Bloodseed is very logic driven and I don't think he's that different from the way you or I would be in his situation." Bloodseed's time buried in the snow has left him close to death, and he scavenges from what's available in order to survive a hostile environment, and to provide the touchstone for the series, Neary offers CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS as near in spirit.

CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER

The second Frontier title will be CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER, illustrated by Paul Johnson, known to readers of CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER and *The Books of Magic*, and written and coloured by Nick Abadzis.

The Abadzis name may be unfamiliar to readers, but he possesses a professional pedigree, having been an editor at Marvel UK before leaving to define the critically acclaimed life of Hugo Tate in *Deadline*. CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER is about fantasy writer Sam Wantling, who's been having bizarre dreams throughout his life, which he uses as raw material for his books. "The older he gets, the more fearsome the dreams become, until finally they're wrecking his life."

At that point, having sought out every other kind of professional help, Sam approaches a witch for advice. Together they discover that he's being hunted by an elemental force who seeds the planet with human incarnations whom it then consumes to absorb their accumulated information. "Sam is the final child," Abadzis explained, "and this thing is breathing down his neck."

Bennent filed the story under "horror," although it's a more psychological form of horror than the visceral frighteners common today, and the title will carry a mature readers advisory. He provided a revelation as to just how disturbing the story is after taking the script for issue three home. "I was reading it in bed, and I had nightmares about it. The last time I had a nightmare was when I was about 10 years old watching Dracula."

...Having sought out every other kind of professional help, Sam approaches a witch for advice.

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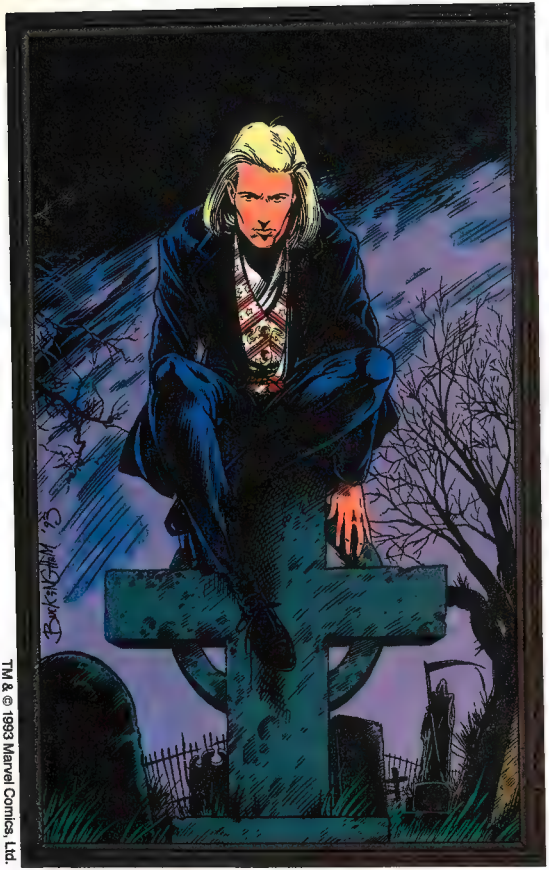
DANCES WITH DEMONS

"The native Indian mythology that forms the basis for DANCES WITH DEMONS is quite a sensitive subject for America," Bennent averred, adding he'd been concerned about the possible trivialisation of cultural heritage in the context of a more standard super hero title. He felt scratching a planned Ghost Rider in the series and transferring DANCES WITH DEMONS to the Frontier imprint would permit a more thorough handling of the material.

It concerns one James Owl. "He's a kind of beach bum in Beverly Hills, giving a very contemporary feel to the story," writer Simon Jowett explained. James is a hedonistic teenager who's unaware he's the spiritual heir to the Ghost Dancer, a powerful native American spirit. "His grandfather is the current Ghost Dancer and there's someone else who wants the power and is putting himself through all kinds of strange mutilation rituals," Jowett disclosed.

"James unwittingly becomes the recipient of this power on his grandfather's death, and also therefore becomes the target of the Manitou, this flesh eating shape changer. This all closes in on Beverly Hills and then moves to the Grand Canyon for a grand finale," Bennent disclosed. Charles Adlard and Rod Ramos will illustrate the series.

Six hundred years offers a broad tapestry for stories...



"It's a Gothic tale of love lost and found again," according to Editor Bennent. "and it's what it's like to lose your soul," Vince said. Mark Buckingham is being drawn away from the science based fantasy of *Miracleman* to depict the gothic mystery romance of IMMORTALIS, and will be providing both pencils and inks.

"...For each four Marvel mainstream books I'm doing, I'd like to add one Marvel Frontier title."

To ensure the memorable launch of Marvel Frontier Comics, a spectacular fully-painted promotional poster is being printed, and all titles will carry special bonus features and cover enhancements. Liam Sharp's cover artwork for all four issues of BLOODSEED will be enhanced with metallic background ink, CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER #1 will feature a glow-in-the-dark cover effect, IMMORTALIS #1 will sport an embossed red metallic cover image, and DANCES WITH DEMONS #1 will have a crimson foil embossed logo.

All four series conclude in November, so where will Marvel Frontier Comics go? Everyone feels the series have potential beyond four issues, and two further titles are in the pipeline: HEAVY WEAPON and SISTERS OF GRACE. As to the ongoing prospects of Frontier, according to Bennent, "Frontier is a case of the moon going 'round the planet. It couldn't be there without the Marvel Universe, so for each four Marvel mainstream books I'm doing, I'd like to add one Marvel Frontier title."

– Frank Plowright

IMMORTALIS

IMMORTALIS differs from the other Marvel Frontier titles in that it will involve Dr. Strange and Mephisto, one in a small role, and the other taking a more direct hand in events. IMMORTALIS concerns itself with Mortigan Goth, who's existed since the 14th century after having sacrificed his soul to the devil. The sacrifice distinguishes Mortigan from those who've *sold* their soul, which is just as well, because in the 20th century these immortals are perishing. Mortigan, concerned that he might also die, must discover the cause of these casualties.

Six hundred years offers a broad tapestry for stories, and in the course of the four issues Mortigan will be coping with problems that would floor lesser men. There will be constant arguments with the devil, the plague, and a woman who loves Mortigan so much she becomes a vampire to stay with him.

Though unable to investigate immortality, writer Nick Vince, known for his CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER tales, has imbued his supporting cast with his own personal experiences, such as working in a deli for a week to properly research

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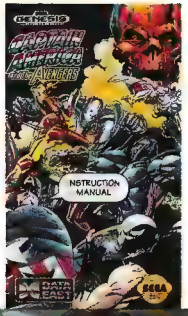


Let the Games Begin...

Marvel and the Video Games Revolution Part I

The state of the video game industry in 1986 is best described as the dawning of a new age or the "Big Bang."

Before that, "state of the art" meant two-dimensional games like *Shooting Gallery* and *River Raid*. Then in '86, the first 8-bit NINTENDO Home Entertainment System reached our shores from Japan and showed the newly emerging gaming public what home video entertainment could become.

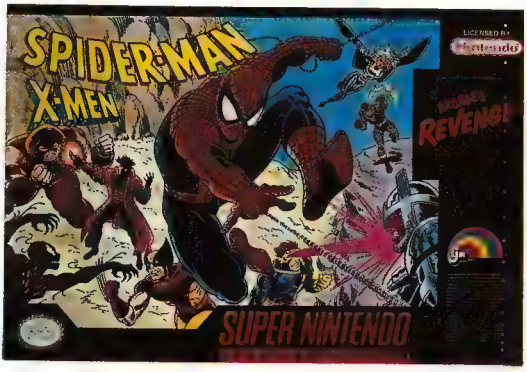
Overnight, two-dimensional monochromatic polygon games like *Pong* and *Asteroids* became three dimensional multicolored games like *Mario Brothers* and *Legend of Zelda*, along with many other role-playing, shooting, or puzzle strategy games.

Three years later, the marketplace entered the next level of gaming with the introduction of the SEGA GENESIS. With its 16-bit power processor, the GENESIS could utilize more colors on screen and provide gamers with a faster and more complex video game. Once again, the industry's standards were re defined.

Today, the video game scene is racing towards yet another new age. SEGA released its new CD-ROM unit in November of 1992, and when the CD-ROM unit is attached to the GENESIS, the compatible gaming software will include games that feature live actors (as opposed to computer characters) and action footage from movies, tv, or sequences specially filmed just for the game.

And as the technological level of the games continues to be raised every few years, an ever growing and demanding audience demands characters with strong personalities that deliver both action and adventure in a game that is based on a compelling storyline, so it only makes sense that Marvel Comics characters have become an integral part of the video game scene.

From the earliest *X-Men* and *Wolverine* games released in 1990 for the 8-bit NES, to the *Spider-Man* (1991) and *X-Men* (1993) games for the 16-BIT GENESIS, to the upcoming *Spider-Man* game for the SEGA CD, Marvel's presence has been influential through its various licenses.



But how does a licensing partnership come to be, to enable the top video game manufacturers to produce these Marvel based games?

Marvel's Consumer Products Vice-President Alan Gordon explained that while Marvel does actively seek out companies that it feels can properly translate characters to the video game medium, many companies have also approached Marvel for story ideas and the rights to adapt heroes and villains for both the home and coin-operated (arcade) video game markets.

As Alan put it, "There are good video game companies and there are great video game companies, and certain companies are right for certain characters and maybe not for others, so Marvel looks to position it's characters as best we can and obtain the best deal and the best developmental team that we can possibly get for the MARVEL games."

Marvel's interest in licensing its characters for video games actively began in 1988 when Marvel Consumer Products staff began meeting with various representatives of game companies to discuss the best ways to adapt Marvel characters for games. Slowly but surely, a few companies signed on and, as their Marvel based video games *(X-Men* and *Spider-Man)* became successful in the marketplace, other companies began to look to Marvel for ideas. Marvel quickly built up a strong creative relationship with some of the top companies in both the home and arcade markets.

DEVELOPING A VIDEO GAME

Once a license is agreed upon and signed by both Marvel and the prospective game company, the creative side of the process begins.

The first decisions, usually made in the contract stage, are which characters are to be used and whether a new story or an established Marvel continuity story arc should be portrayed. Then the task of video game development moves to the video game company's production team.

SEGA'S Ed Innunziata explained the various stages in the making of a video game by using the recently released *X-Men* game for the SEGA GENESIS as an example. Ed explained that once the deal was signed Marvel inundated the SEGA team with reference materials that contained artwork featuring the X-Men, including character personality profiles and super power descriptions. As Ed put it , "Receiving all the reference is great, but all the members of the production team including myself are big Marvel fans, so we knew the *X-Men* pretty well."

The team's first priority was to focus on creating and coordinating the various moves that each X-Man would have when manipulated by a player using the game controls so that, for example, when a player would press the 'A' button, Wolverine would jump, slice, or commit whatever move you the player had chosen. The most important consideration for the game developer is that manipulating the characters through the controls must be easy, must feel right and be great fun.

Simultaneously, other members of the video development team are creating the game background illustrations and the "boss" villains — the key villains that the heroes must reach on each level to advance to the next level.

Throughout the game development process, there is a back and forth communication going on behind the scenes between Marvel and SEGA. The SEGA team sends Marvel a video tape of the game in process so that the Marvel editorial staff and creative services folks, such as Editor Bob Harras and Advertising Art Director Dana Moreshead (for the *X-Men* game), can "scrutinize the character movements and be sure that the characters act, talk and definitely fight exactly the way they would in the comics," Harras explained. They also make sure that no part of Marvel continuity is disrupted or portrayed incorrectly, and if some change must be made to improve the playability of the video game (as in the case of the KONAMI *X-Men* arcade game when Colossus was given a burst power), the editor will participate in that decision.

Once the final reviewing, debugging (during which SEGA'S game testers play the game and search for computer glitches and/or faults), and play testing are complete, the final video game version , which took about 12-18 months to complete (16 months in the case of *X-Men)*, is ready to be shipped in computer disc format to Japan. There it will enter the final two stages of its development.

First, SEGA'S design division is sent "focus cover art" by Marvel to incorporate in the game's cover design. Second, the game, in disc form, is mass produced in Japan. The finished video game cartridges are put in their boxes and shipped to video game stores worldwide to be enjoyed by all gamers.

ARCADE GAMES

The history of Marvel's arcade games is much shorter than that of the home video games, but other than a Marvel based pinball game that appeared in the late '70s, Marvel's first arcade video games were *Captain America and the Avengers* and *Spider-Man*, both of which appeared in 1991. Both games were popular with arcade players and both games went on to be translated for both the GENESIS and the SUPER NINTENDO.

In 1992, Marvel reached an agreement with Konami to unleash the 4 and 6-player *X-Men* arcade game. The game's playability and fun caught on like wildfire and the game went on to be voted best arcade game of 1992 by both gamers and various video game magazines.

The process by which arcade games are developed is exactly the same as for the home video games. The main differences are that arcade level games have much more memory and 32-64 bit processors translate to much more sophisticated and faster action games. Another difference is in the production time; an arcade game can take up to two years to go through the various development stages before it hits the arcades, but once there, a great arcade game can look forward to a long life with but a few system updates to improve game challenge, and can ultimately expect to be translated to the various home game systems.

– Joe Caponsacco

NEXT ISSUE: *MARVEL AGE looks at the future plans for the Marvel video games, and offers some exclusive insights into the games currently in development.*

If you have ever been confused about the difference between a *"bit"* and a *"megabyte,"* the following handy dandy guide will bring you out of the fog, or at least impress your friends.

The computer (the GENESIS and SUPER NES are computers) is a machine that reads and reacts to units of information in the "binary system." One unit of this information is a "bit." If you string eight of these bits together, you get one "byte."

The next step is called a *"kilobyte."* Judging by its name, one would guess that a kilobyte contains one thousand bytes. Close but wrong.

Because of the way a computer reads information, a kilobyte is equal to 1,024 bytes. And finally, we get to the term that all video gamers are familiar with — the *megabyte*. One megabyte is equivalent to 1,024 kilobytes, which means a whole lot of information and a very explosive video game.

Thus, with each increase in the amount of information a computer can include, gamers have proceeded from the very early, archaic (by today's standards) games like *Pong* to today's high-resolution, multi-player, total involvement entertainment like *Starfox*.

For more information on the way a computer works, the author recommends the book *The Little Mac Book* by Robin Williams, published by Peachpit Press of Berkeley, CA. Ask for it in your local book store or library.

THE MARVEL AGE VIDEO SWEEPSTAKES

MARVEL AGE readers have the opportunity to receive ***FREE MARVEL VIDEO GAMES.*** Three lucky winners will receive the Acclaim 16-bit *Spider-Man/X-Men* game, and *three more lucky winners* will receive the Sega Genesis *X-Men* game. Winners will be chosen at random, and you can only enter *once*.

All you have to do is write on a 3 x 5 card your:

Name and Age
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Phone Number
Which game you prefer, should you win.

Then send the card to:

Marvel Age Video Sweepstakes
Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

All entries must be postmarked no later than July 1, and must be received no later than August 15, 1993. No purchase is necessary, and there is a limit of one entry per person. Winners will be chosen by random drawing, and all winners will be notified by first class mail no later than October 1, 1993. This sweepstakes is sponsored by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. For a list of winners, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the above address. Requests for a list of winners must be received by October 1. Allow four weeks for delivery.

EPIC Center

CREATING CREATOR OWNED COMICS

"Most of the Epic creator owned properties come to us with their creative teams intact," Executive Editor Carl Potts said. "They're created by a writer and an artist and are presented to us with the idea that their creators will be doing the work on the actual book."

SPYKE: TM & © 1993 Mike Baron and Bill Reinhold

Epic Editor Marc McLaurin, whose titles include CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER, the Barkerverse Razorline books, and Heavy Hitter ALIEN LEGION, agreed. "We don't really pick a creative team," he said. "It's more like the creative team picks themselves, and works on the project that they really think is worth Carl looking at; you know, visuals–the great hook–like a trailer for a movie, great visuals and great samples of what it all will be like. They put it together and give it to Carl, who either 'yays' or 'nays' it, depending on what he is looking for now."

"Occasionally a writer will send in a property and doesn't have a commitment from an artist yet," Carl continued. "On occasion, if the property is really strong and I happen to know of an artist who would be right for the project is available, I'll put the creators in contact with each other and see if they can work out the creative and financial deal necessary to proceed.

"On rarer occasions it happens the other way around" he added, "where someone who is primarily an artist starts creating a property, but it needs to be fleshed out with the aid of an experienced and quality writer. And that's usually a little easier match to make. But those situations are rare."

One difference in editing an Epic title, according to FEUD and DRAGON LINES Editor David Wohl, is that "with Epic creative teams you're giving advice–you're more like an advisor and less like an editor. Epic creative people have more control [over their work]. They care about their characters; it's in their best interest to have the book work."

It is important to Carl that the editors feel good with the books they are assigned. "Hopefully properties go to editors that are particularly interested in them. It's a bit awkward to have someone working on a property they're not into," Potts explained. Often, the only dilemma is an editor finding time for a hot project. "If they're already booked solid, and they like the book, they might ask for it anyway . . . even if it means a heavier workload."

Most Epic projects are created by top professionals with a proven track record. However, "there are rare, and *very* rare, occasions when someone who is fairly new [or] not well known is just so awesomely talented that I can be convinced to try and arrange a deal for them to bring the property here and work with it," Potts said.

UNTAMED: TM & © 1993 Neil Hansen.

For example, the opportunity arose for Neil Hansen to write, pencil and ink his book THE UNTAMED (which debuted in May). "Neil has been around a few years, working mostly [for the independents]. He has the capability of turning into one of *the* writer/artists of the '90s. I wanted to see if we could showcase his work and watch him develop here.

"But mostly we're looking for people like Peter David, Ron Lim (DRAGON LINES), Chuck Dixon (LAWDOG), George Perez, and the Kuberts, [with their] level of skill and popularity.

"The market has made it very clear that it's the action/adventure stuff that is what the're mostly interested in, so that's what we'll be concentrating on. But Epic will continue to produce a wide variety of books in a wide variety of genres, and more esoteric type subjects, too," Potts concluded.

Lia M. Pelosi

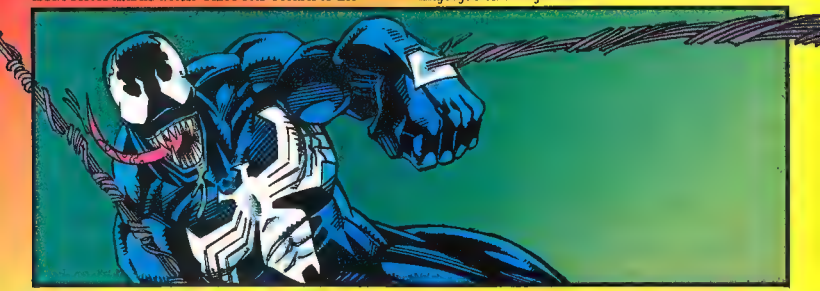
ALIEN LEGION: TM & © 1993 Carl Potts.

Hot Sheet

"Hot Sheet"—MARVEL AGE's way of telling you about books you don't want to miss. Grab a pen and take notes. There will be a quiz.

ACTION WITH A CAPITAL P... OR WAS THAT V?

The last place on Earth you'll want to be this Summer is Oakland, CA, because that's when and where the Punisher and Venom cross paths and put a serious hurt on anyone who gets in their way! In fact, the best place to catch all of the action of the VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE limited series is at your local comic shop. This three-issue series marks writer Carl Potts' return to the character he penned when he helped create PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL. It also heralds the reunion of penciler Tom Lyle and inker Joe Rubinstein, who wowed fans with their work on various *Batman* projects published by the Distinguished Competition.



Speaking of that Caped Crusader and his erstwhile publisher, Mike Gold, former DC Comics Editor turned Vice President of the Connecticut comic shop chain *Dream Factory*, sees the VENOM/PUNISHER series as an event waiting to happen. "This is one of those natural team-ups," stated Gold. "Once it's announced, you can't understand why it didn't happen earlier. The visual contrast between the two makes a nice counter-point for the stylistic similarities between the two. Tom Lyle's pencils look great, and this series should give him the star status he so richly deserves."

Other people who spend the majority of their time around comic books were also taken aback by the prospect of this team-up of mega-characters and major creators.

• Chris Cooper, CAGE editor and DARKHOLD writer—"I'm a big fan of Tom Lyle's work and I think he'll do an interesting interpretation of the Punisher, a character who's been interpreted many times by many people (and seems to lend himself to that)."

• Steven Snyder of Ohio's *Central City Comics*—"This series features the two dirtiest fighters in the Marvel Universe written by Carl Potts, one of the best writers of the grim and gritty genre. And Carl doesn't let us down. The story begins with high speed action and doesn't seem to let up. Tom Lyle and Joe Rubinstein's art is terrific, capturing all of the action in Carl's script."

• Nel Yomtov, editor of IRON MAN and AVENGERS WEST COAST—"It's great to have artist Tom Lyle's work under the Marvel Banner. His Venom has got to be seen to be believed. This marks a major talent doing a major job on a major title."

THESE CHARACTERS ARE VERY THREE DIMENSIONAL

Over the years the various X-titles, from UNCANNY X-MEN to WOLVERINE, have always prided themselves on featuring fully fleshed-out and believable characters dealing with issues present in the real world as well as all of the extraordinary things super heroes encounter. Now, during the year that marks the X-Men's Thirtieth Anniversary, these characters will be three-dimensional outside their books as well as in the stories.

Beginning with the May release of X-FACTOR #92 and ending with the September release of WOLVERINE #75, each month a hologram will be featured on the cover of a different X-book. Each hologram will be shot from a sculpture made from artwork by that particular book's regular artist and interpreted by holographic sculptor Dario. To prepare them for the event, "Hot Sheet" contributors were sent copies of Joe Quesada's Havok drawing for the X-FACTOR hologram as well as Greg Capullo's Cable for the special issue of X-FORCE.

Here's what they had to say:

• Shelton Drum, President of *Heroes Aren't Hard To Find*, a comic shop chain with stores in both North and South Carolina—"Fans can't seem to get enough of holograms and special covers, and the art on these is fabulous! Greg Capullo's Cable seems to leap out of the page, and Joe Quesada's Havok is fantastic. Just when you think Joe's work is the best you've ever seen, next month's books come and he's better than ever before."

This Havok statue was created by the sculptor/painter Dario, based on artwork by Joe Quesada, for the hologram that will appear on the cover of X-FACTOR #92. This is the first of the X-Men anniversary holograms being shot by Polaroid. The full story on how the holograms are made will be told in the cover feature in MARVEL AGE #127. Photograph by Christopher Ebel.

• Buddy Saunders of Texas retail chain *Lone Star Comics*—"The X-title hologram covers will make a hot item even hotter! The Quesada Havok hologram is a great way to start off the run."

• Steve Snyder—"Last year Marvel proved that it was the leader in high quality hologram production with their phenomenal set of Spider-Man holograms. I can only imagine what improvements they have made in the past years. With art from such outstanding creators as Joe Quesada, Greg Capullo, and Andy Kubert to work from, these hologram comics are going to be hot."

For the full scoop on the making of the X-holograms, check out MARVEL AGE #127, on sale next month.

HYPERKIND ™ & © 1993 Clive Barker.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"At Moondog's, we are absolutely confident that the Marvel [Razorline] will be an unqualified success. Everything that we have seen to date is a ground-breaking synthesis of both Clive Barker's trademarked terrifying imagination and Marvel's patented pulse-pounding style of storytelling. Moondog's has nothing but the highest hopes and anticipations for the success of the Marvel Barkerverse."

—Gary Colabuono
CEO of *Moondog's Comics*

BARK(ER)ING UP THE RIGHT TREE

Summer is usually a happy time, but the Summer of 1993 will most likely be remembered as the season when Marvel and Clive Barker walked the razor's edge with the release of the "Razorline" super hero books. This new super hero universe, created by film and novel maven Barker and written and drawn by some of the industry's top new talents, promises to combine the best of Marvel's penchant for high adventure with Barker's slant towards fantasy. The first two releases in this all-new line are HYPERKIND and ECTOKID, and people in and around comicdom are excited by what they've seen so far.

HYPERKIND, written by former Eclipse Comics editor Fred Burke and drawn by Paris Cullins and Bob Petrecca, is Barker's first super-group and, according to Shelton Drum of *Heroes Aren't Hard To Find*, it marks a long-awaited combining of two diverse worlds. "Barker fans! Super-hero fans! Unite!" exclaimed Drum. "Finally the best of both worlds comes together in what promises to be the best new comic in ages. The industry needs a comic about new heroes in a 'realistic' world that is well thought out, and we're betting HYPERKIND is it."

Other people are filled with anticipation of the release of this landmark series.

• Gary Colabuono of the greater Chicago-based *Moondog's Comics Inc.*—"...how many people [around Marveldom] have heard of Fred Burke? Fred's been overseeing Eclipse's comic book adaptations of Clive Barker's short stories for years now. I doubt any comic book writer has a greater affinity for the inner workings of Barker's mind than Fred. I also remember Fred's experimental super hero comic *Phaze*. That title was light years ahead of its time. I hadn't thought about it in years. But when I read the preview of HYPERKIND, I immediately remembered *Phaze*. It's so great that the House of Ideas is giving a gifted young author like Fred Burke a chance to expand his audience with a high profile Barkerverse verse book. Barker's gritty world of alien-powered super-misfits has fan-favorite winner written all over it."

• Carl Potts, Marvel/Epic Executive Editor—"HYPERKIND is the perfect book to kick off the 'Razorline'—Clive Barker's universe of super heroes. It starts of with a ton of action and ends with ten tons!"

ECTOKID, which Barker conceived as a supernatural hero book that promises to combine action with weirdness, also engendered strong positive reaction from comic readers. The new series is written by James Robinson (who wrote the graphic novel 67 SECONDS as well as issues of DC Comics' *Legends of the Dark Knight*) who teams up with penciling newcomer Steve Skroce and veteran inker Bob (*Aquaman*, *Dreadstar*) Dvorak to give ectoplasmic flesh to Barker's vision. Previews of this collaboration garnered more than mere favorable response.

• Gary Colabuono—"Last year, after previewing 67 SECONDS, I predicted that the career of writer James Robinson would be well worth following. This year, let me restate my prediction: This guy is great! In ECTOKID

he takes Clive Barker's concept and gives it genuinely creepy-crawly life. And let's not overlook the contributions of the art team of Steve Skroce and Bob Dvorak. There is a wonderful clarity to their pages. Deep down inside, the reader knows that, if the 'Ectokid fantasy' was in fact an 'Ectokid reality,' that this is exactly what the world would look like."

• Carl Potts—"Though not yet well known, James Robinson is one of comics' better writers. He takes Clive's ECTOKID concept and, with Steven Scroce, fleshes it out in exciting and unsuspecting ways."

• Shelton Drum—"With all of the attention that horror/fantasy books are getting these days, ECTOKID looks to be a sure fire hit. Somewhat of a cross between DOCTOR STRANGE and *Dracula*, but attuned to a newer, fresher audience, ECTOKID could very well be the book to hook people on the Barkerverse."

SUNTAN OIL REQUIRED

Now then, what Summer would be complete without a trip to the beach—Marvel style! This year the MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL brings together under one cover the hottest hunks and babes of the Marvel Universe for a beach blast hosted on Monster Island by the Infinity Watch's very own horny devil Pip The Troll (who uses the power of the Infinity Gauntlet to gather both willing and reluctant guests). The art for the book is still streaming in, but with a painted cover featuring Rogue by Joe Jusko and pin-ups by Kevin Maguire, Adam Hughes, Jeff Johnson, and Ron Lim (to name a few) and an *au naturale* pin-up of a major Marvel hero (no kidding), the MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL promises to be one of the hottest highlights of the year. Everyone around comics is talking about it.

• Steve Snyder—"The SWIMSUIT SPECIAL is being edited by the man behind this year's MARVEL YEAR IN REVIEW? Let me at it! Evan Skolnick's YEAR IN REVIEW was a hilarious magazine and I expect no less from this year's SWIMSUIT SPECIAL; after all, we're starting out with Pip The Troll as the motivating force. How can this book be anything but entertaining. I do hope, however, that the rumor of a Rick Parker drawn centerfold of 'The Bossmen' in swimwear is untrue."

• Mike Gold—"After the recent MARVEL MASTERPIECES card series, Joe Jusko couldn't be hotter. And we're going to get an all-nude pin-up of a major Marvel hero? That will give new meaning to 'The House of Ideas'!"

• Brian Schur of *Cosmic Comics* in Lincoln, Nebraska—"Just in time for Summer, all of our favorite super heroes catching some rays on Monster Island, drawn by some of the hottest artists. Bring your sun screen: this is gonna be sizzling!!"

And perhaps CAGE editor Chris Cooper summed up best the anticipation surrounding the SWIMSUIT SPECIAL when he said "The Swimsuit mag is always an eyeful!"

THE QUIZ: What five books or series are must reads this Summer, that is, if you're into excitement?

– *Jerry A. Novick*

Stan's SOAP BOX

Hi, Heroes.

By now I'm fairly certain that most of you have become frankly frantic fans of some of the great new titles being produced by Marvel U.K. And for those of you who may be newly-arrived from some distant planet, U.K. stands for United Kingdom, which stands for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

But here's something you possibly didn't know. . .

Even the most rabidly rhapsodic readers of all our brand-new British titles, which are written, drawn and produced at our super-snazzy offices right in the heart of London, may not be aware that mighty Marvel has had bullpens in London, producing comics ever since the 1970's!

"So why haven't we seen them?" you ask! "Why haven't we even heard of them?"

The answer is — the publications we turned out during the first two decades were really never intended for American audiences!

You see, comics are generally done much differently in England. Whereas we in the U.S. publish our comic books monthly, the British have historically published their own comics weekly, just like the Japanese do. Also, most of the English comics (especially in the 70's and early 80's) were printed tabloid newspaper size without glossy covers and with little or no color in their pages. So, they basically bore very little resemblance to American comic books, except that they contained strips.

Even in the area of the strips, there was a great difference. Most of the English weekly comics were intended for very, very young readers. With few exceptions, each strip was only one-page long and most of them were simply humorous stories involving young kids or cute little animals. As for the styles of artwork, most of the strips looked like the early Sunday funnies that appeared in many American newspapers at the beginning of the 1900's.

When we first started publishing in London in the '70s, we tried to do our comics in the same format as the British strips. We printed them tabloid-size, without color, using very short stories, and keeping them simple enough for a very young audience.

Now comes the heart-breaking part. Despite all our efforts, it just didn't work! Oh, we managed to make a dollar or two. We hung in there and refused to give up. We kept changing, modifying, experimenting, always looking for the right formula. But Marvel in England simply never reached the heights of popularity of its American cousins.

Then came the breakthrough! After all those years, we finally caught wise! It occurred to us that we were just chasing our tails. Why try to imitate the British styles when they can do it so much better? Why not create magazines for Britain in our *own* style, exactly like the ones we publish in the States?

Sounds simple, eh? So why did it take us almost twenty years to figure it out?!!

Anyway, since all of us like a happy ending, here's the bottom line. We're now publishing real Marvel-type super hero action thrillers in the U.K., mags that have great glossy covers, are replete with rich, vibrant colors, and have the same kind of sensational writing, artwork, satire, sub-plots and suspense as our own American-based titles. In other words, they're produced in London, but they're Marvel all the way!

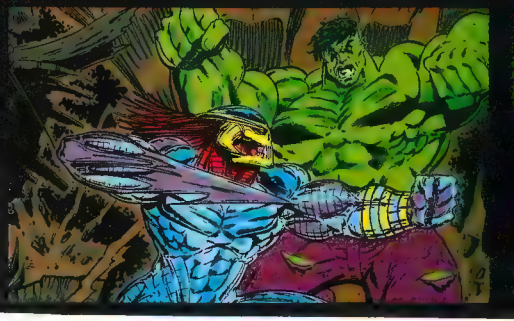
So, how are they doing? Glad you asked! They've been selling in England like there's no tomorrow — and, to make the whole thing even more triumphant, ever since we started shipping them to fans in the United States, their sales have been on a par with the rest of your mildly magnificent Marvel masterpieces! Okay, students, what lesson have we learned from today's solemn sermon? Simply this: Never ever give up! Even if it takes twenty long years, stick with whatever you're doing and sooner or later you'll strike pay dirt! Of course, I don't know any banks that'll accept pay dirt for deposit, but hey, we can't figure *everything* out for you!

Now then, till next ish when we'll share a few more moments of quality time together, let me leave you with this obvious but omniscient observation: "Comica amica nobicum!" (Thanks to Peter Coogan, Michigan State University)

Excelsior!

– Stan Lee

THE LETTER COLUMN



Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Attention, correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info on request!

The title of this month's letter column is the brainchild of Evan Sung of New York, NY and, as he explained, "it's informative, funny, and inexpensive." Not much we can add to that, except to say thanks, Evan! And, of course, to remind everybody else to send in their own reasonably priced letter column titles. If we use one of your ideas, then you'll be able to brag that your name was printed in the same space as Evan Sung's! What more could anyone ask for?

Dear MARVEL AGE,

I like SLAPSTICK because he is funny. I don't want him to have a limited series. I think he should have an everlasting series. I hope to work at Marvel someday.

Eric Edvalson
2006 Tinkle
Richland, WA 99352

We like SLAPSTICK too, Eric. And so does MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS Editor Terry Kavanagh. In fact, Terry likes SLAPSTICK so much that he may turn up in a new MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS serial before too long! We'll tell you more about it once everything's set.

Also, thank you for the drawings you sent. We hope you do get to work at Marvel someday. It's a fun place to be. Good luck!

Speaking of fun places to be, it's time once again to place ourselves firmly in the middle of our LETTER we pulled out one letter that we think will be of particular interest to Marvelites around the world. In fact, this time our Letter of the Month takes an especially international view, as it focuses on the new titles being published by the British branch of Marvel, Marvel UK.

Dear Steve,

First of all, congratulations on the New MARVEL AGE! It improves every month, and #121 was an excellent issue. I particularly enjoyed the features on THE REN AND STIMPY SHOW and the Marvel Comics Video Library. But the reason I am writing to you is the topic of another article: "Marvel UK Looks to the Future."

Let me preface this by saying that I am very proud of the efforts Marvel UK has been releasing to the US market. Before Marvel US started releasing the UK efforts, it was impossible to find any British Marvel books. All I could scrounge was a few CAPTAIN BRITAIN's and a couple of SUPER SPIDER-MAN's, DEATH'S HEAD's and DRAGON'S CLAW's. Then when the UK Genesis line was being released, I rejoiced. Yet, with all the fine efforts by such luminaries as Dan Abnett and Liam Sharp (as well as veteran artist-now-editor Paul Neary), one thing has been bothering me. That is the way that Marvel US characters are showing up in the UK books without having any effect on that character's regular continuity. The best thing that happened was when Terry Kavanagh cross-referenced MOTORMOUTH in an issue of EXCALIBUR.

First and foremost, I don't see why an established character has to appear in *every* UK book, particularly those already-overexposed X-Men. I know darned well that any of those UK talents can carry a comic book without a multitude of guest stars. Sure, including some guest stars isn't bad. I didn't mind seeing US characters launch the UK books. I even applauded when Dark Angel temporarily joined the X-Men. But what disturbed me about that was that you never saw Shevaugn in the X-Mansion in the US books. Heck, no one even mentioned her! As far as the US titles are concerned, Nick Fury probably never heard of Harley Davis, and the Fantastic Four isn't aware that there's a Minion! Those events were all very worthwhile, but what's the use if you refuse to let UK characters guest star in American books? I think Mr. Kavanagh is once again taking a small step to resolve this problem, as I read that PEN-DRAGON will be in an issue of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS.

The MyS-TECH wars look excellent, maybe even as monumental as THE INFINITY WAR. But if the U.S. heroes guest star, and the MyS-TECH isn't even mentioned in any of their respective titles, why bother having them guest star? I hope I have successfully brought this to your attention, and I would like to hear a reply and/or how other readers feel in the future issues of MARVEL AGE.

Thank you for your time.

Joey Marchese
P.O. Box 2197
Union, NJ 07083

Glad you're enjoying the Marvel UK titles, Joey. And you raise an interesting point, one which led us straight to Marvel UK Editor in Chief Paul Neary, who replied:

"When I was invited to create the Marvel UK Universe, my first thought was to make it different, to try new ideas that would not merely trade off Marvel US's great concepts. So we based our continuity on the techno-evil of MyS-TECH and, in designing our characters, emphasized cyborgs, female heroes, new age philosophies and cynical characters not dressed in the traditional super heroic garb.

All this was done to avoid diluting the pre-existing Marvel US set-up, for which I have tremendous

respect. We are continuing to get heavily into concepts such as new-science and gene splicing, and have developed an entire range of characters who have been genetically enhanced by Gene-Sys, an offshoot of MyS-TECH.

So, we have set up a little extension of the Marvel Universe which plays with different toys.

One thing we're still working on is the way in which the two arms of Marvel might wish to use each other's characters, in order that Marvel UK might be adding something *new* to the Marvel Universe, rather than leeching off it. To that end, we have "borrowed" Marvel US characters in order to help establish the UK line. This was necessary to underline the fact that we have only *one* Marvel Universe.

In response to your question as to why Marvel US comics have not featured our characters widely, remember that it was much more important for Marvel UK to establish itself than for Marvel US editors to immediately start guesting unknown new characters. Having said that, I note Motormouth should be turning up in the pages of the Hulk very soon. I have high hopes that, as our characters become more defined, the US writers will take a liking to them and feel free to use them as guest characters."

There you have it, Joey. And we agree heartily that we'd like to hear from the rest of you MARVEL AGE readers. What are your opinions concerning the Marvel UK characters and their relationships with the rest of the Marvel Universe?

Dear MARVEL AGE,

I want to know why there are three Hulks. Friends are telling me that there's a bad Hulk and a good Hulk. It's confusing. I thought the three of them were good, and I can't tell if the smart Hulk is good or bad.

I hope I can get the real story from you guys.

Howard Hayes
706 W. 45th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90037

Actually, Howard, the Hulk has always been the same alter ego of the same guy, Robert Bruce Banner. Nevertheless, Bruce has gone through a lot of different transformations over the years.

We'd bet the three Hulks you're referring to are his three most recent incarnations: the childlike green Hulk, the smarter grey Hulk, and the current green version who's a blend of both his predecessors (with Bruce's own personality to boot). We wouldn't really call any of these Hulks "bad." It's true that the childlike Hulk periodically flew into uncontrollable rages and that the grey Hulk was pretty nasty, but they were usually provoked by other people attacking them. So even though they may have done a lot of damage, they weren't really evil.

And now, by popular demand, it's time for our monthly. . .

Next
~ Making X-Men Holograms
~ Frank Miller's Daredevil
~ Marvel Video - Part 2
. . . and *more* – in MARVEL AGE #127.

That's right — it's time to join our favorite Wild Agents of Marvel as they take pen in hand to exchange some news and views. Remember: If you'd like to take part in a WAM Jam yourself, all you have to do is write to us on WAM stationery or include your WAM I.D. number in your letter.

To all of you wild and crazy guys at MARVEL AGE,

I have just read STRYFE'S STRIKE FILE #1 and I'm *exploding* with questions:

1) First of all, who is this Holocaust character?

2) When (if ever) will Graydon Creed and his father finally confront each other?

3) Who the heck is Threnody? Where did she come from?

4) Does the Hellfire Club still exist? If so, who leads it?

5) Where are the Upstarts? I've been trying to find at least one comic book with them in it, but no such luck.

6) If the Eternals are immortal, how does Stryfe plan to kill them?

7) Where has this Askani character disappeared to? Will she make any more appearances anytime soon?

8) I know that having this question answered is a longshot, but here goes: Is Cable actually Nathan Summers? Or could it be that Stryfe is Nathan and Cable is just *his* duplicate. Or vice versa?! (Whew!)

9) And finally, is Stryfe still alive, mayhap? This is the first time I've wanted a villain to return. (Well, actually, I did take a fancy to Sebastian Shaw as leader of the Hellfire Club. . .) But with Stryfe gone, it leaves so many questions unanswered.

I'm hoping that you'll answer these burning questions for me. And I hope I haven't offended anybody wanting Stryfe back.

Thanks!

Allen Bowen
Rt. 3, Box 3488
Orlando, CA 95963

Shucks, Allen, you haven't offended us. But, naturally, there are only so many secrets we can give away in a letter column. As a result, we can't answer all of your questions here, but we can suggest that you keep reading the X-titles to pick up on additional clues and further developments. You'll learn some of the answers before too long. While you're at it, keep an eye on MARVEL AGE and this summer's X-MEN 30TH ANNIVERSARY MAGAZINE for more of the behind the scenes secrets.

For now, let's just say that we wouldn't be too surprised to discover that we haven't seen the last of Stryfe. And as far as the Eternals are concerned, you have to bear in mind that they're immortal, not invulnerable; it's not easy to kill them, but it can be done.

Hey, if those cleverly veiled hints don't whet your appetite, we don't know what will. See y'all next month!

checklist

FIRST WEEK

THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE
#2 (of 4) 2.50
Maj. Grubert witnesses an assassination attempt on Samuel.

ALIEN LEGION: ONE PLANET AT A TIME #2 (of 3) 4.95
Nomad Squadron is stranded on Bakel II.

AVENGERS WEST COAST #97 1.25

CABLE #4 2.00
The Six Pack reforms–without Cable.

CAGE #17 1.25

CAPTAIN AMERICA #418 1.25
The conclusion of the D-Man saga.

DAREDEVIL #319 1.25

DARKHAWK #30 1.25

DARKMAN #5 of 6 2.95
Darkman comes face to face with Durant.

DEATH'S HEAD II & KILLPOWER: BATTLETIDE II #1 2.95

GROO THE WANDERER #103 2.25
Groo learns how to read.

HULK ANNUAL #19 2.95

ILLUMINATOR #4 4.99
Illuminator battles the archangel Metatron.

KILLPOWER #1 (of 4) 2.95

NAMOR #41 1.25

NIGHTSTALKERS #10 2.25

NOMAD #16 1.75

ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER #14 1.75
Blaze battles the original Zodiac.

PUNISHER: ORIGIN OF MICROCHIP #2 (of 2) 1.75
The first meeting of Micro & Frank Castle.

PUNISHER SUMMER SPECIAL #3 2.50

REN & STIMPY #9 1.75

SHADOW RIDERS #3 (of 4) 2.50

SHE-HULK #54 1.75
"To Die and Live in L.A." part 3 (of 6).

SPIDER-MAN 2099 #10 1.25
What's the secret of Miguel and Gabe's mom?

SPIDER-MAN CLASSIC #5 1.25

THUNDERSTRIKE #3 1.25
Sif asks Thunderstrike to find Thor.

UNCANNY X-MEN #303 1.25

UNTAMED #3 of 3 1.95
Griff's wife is captured by the Kosansui.

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #2 2.00

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #103 1.25

SECOND WEEK

AKIRA TPB #9 16.95
Re-presenting AKIRA #25-27.

ALPHA FLIGHT #123 1.75

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #380 1.25

BARBIE #32 1.25

DARKHOLD #11 2.25

GHOST RIDER #40 2.25

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #39 1.25

INVADERS #4 (of 4) 1.75

KNIGHTS OF PENDRAGON II #14 1.75

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #134 1.50
Ghost Rider /Major Victory/ Iron Fist/Wolverine.

MIDNIGHT MEN #3 (of 4) 1.95
Barnet Pasternak joins the Midnight Men.

MORBIUS REVISITED #1 1.95

OFFCASTES #2 (of 3) 2.50
Zak discovers that Grant is an I.M. agent.

PUNISHER WAR ZONE #18 1.75
"Jericho" part 2 (of 3).

QUASAR #49 1.25

RAVAGE 2099 #9 1.25
Ravage encounters the former head of ECO.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #212 2.25

SECRET DEFENDERS #6 1.75

SILVER SABLE #15 1.25

SLEEPWALKER #27 1.25

THOR ANNUAL #18 2.95

WARHEADS: BLACK DAWN #2 (of 2) 1.75
Leona joins the ranks of the undead.

WILD THING #5 1.75
Nikki battles a VR-addicted street gang.

WOLVERINE #72 1.75

WONDER MAN #24 1.25

X-FACTOR #93 1.25
The U.S. government issues the Magneto Protocols.

X-MEN ANIMATION ADVENTURES #10 1.25
Featuring Archangel.

THIRD WEEK

AVENGERS #365 1.25
The team argues Sersi's fate.

CAPTAIN AMERICA: BLOODSTONE HUNT TPB 15.95

CONAN #271 1.25
Conan leads the Free Companions into the Dark Valley.

CYBERSPACE 3000 #2 1.75
Galactus sends Dark Angel to investigate SOL III.

DARK ANGEL #14 1.75
The aftermath of the Mys-Tech War.

DEADPOOL #1 (of 4) 2.95

DEATH'S HEAD II & DIE-CUT #1 (of 4) 2.95

DOCTOR WHO #200 4.95

DOOM 2099 #8 1.25
Doom encounters bizarre foes in the Cyberverse.

EXCALIBUR #68 1.75
The Starjammers come to collect rogue Shi'Ar war criminal Cerise.

GHOST RIDER TPB: RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS 19.95

G.I. JOE #139 1.50
The return of the Transformers.

INCREDIBLE HULK #408 1.25

IRON MAN ANNUAL #14 2.95

MAD DOG #4 1.25

MARVEL AGE #127 1.00

MARVEL MASTERPIECES COLLECTION #4 (of 4) 2.95

MARVEL TALES #276 1.25
Spidey meets the Spectacular Spider-Kid.

MORBIUS #12 2.25

NIGHT THRASHER #1 1.75

PUNISHER #81 1.25
Frank uncovers a ring of crooked cops.

SPIDER-MAN #37 1.75

SPYKE #2 (of 4) 1.95
Spyke falls for the cunning Conita.

SUPER SOLDIERS #5 1.75

TROUBLE WITH GIRLS #3 (of 4) 1.95

WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH #19 1.75

WHAT IF #52 1.25
"What if Wolverine led Alpha Flight?"

X-MEN #23 1.25
The Dark Riders kidnap Cyclops.

ANNUALS

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY ANNUAL #3 2.95
Introducing Cuchulain, the Irish Wolfhound.

INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL #19 2.95
The Hulk battles the deadly Lazarus.

IRON MAN ANNUAL #14 2.95
Who is the mysterious villain known as the Face Thief?

PUNISHER WAR ZONE ANNUAL #1 2.95
Frank faces the furious Phalanx.

THOR ANNUAL #18 2.95
Thor battles the hot new Flame.

MATCHES OF THE MONTH

DEATHLOK #26 1.75
Deathlok vs. Hobgoblin

FANTASTIC FOUR #379 1.25
The FF vs. Dr. Doom

INCREDIBLE HULK #408 1.25
Hulk vs. Piecemeal

NEW WARRIORS #38 1.25
Night Thrasher vs. the Poison Memories

QUASAR #49 1.25
Kayla vs. Kismet

SECRET DEFENDERS #6 1.75
Secret Defenders vs. the Suicide Pack

UNCANNY X-MEN #303 1.25
X-Men vs. the Upstarts

WONDER MAN #24 1.25
Wonder Man vs. Goliath

FOURTH WEEK

AKIRA #35 4.95
Tetsuo undergoes a frightening metamorphosis.

BLACK AXE #5 1.75
Black Axe battles the Cardinal's Guard.

DEATH'S HEAD II #9 1.75
DH journeys to Earth 2020 to learn his origin.

DEATHLOK #26 1.75
Hobgoblin marks Deathlok's family for death.

DOCTOR WHO

CLASSIC COMICS #8 4.95
Re-presenting classic tales of the 60's & 70's.

FEUD #2 (of 4) 1.95
The Kites team up with the Grunts.

HELLSTORM #5 2.95
Damon helps a possessed girl.

THE INCOMPLETE

DEATH'S HEAD #8 (of 12) 1.75

INFINITY CRUSADE #3 (of 6) 2.50

JOE KUBERT'S TOR #3 (of 4) 5.95
Tor battles the Lizard King.

MARVEL 1993

SWIMSUIT SPECIAL 3.95

MARVEL COMICS

PRESENTS #135 1.50
Ghost Rider/Daredevil / Excalibur & Wolverine.

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT JULY 1993
Free, comic-sized checklist of Marvel's July offerings.

METEOR MAN #1 (of 6) 1.25
The rescheduled debut.

NEW WARRIORS #38 1.25

PUNISHER 2099 #7 1.25
Part 1 of "Love & Bullets."

PUNISHER WAR ZONE

ANNUAL #1 2.95

SABRETOOTH #1 (of 4) 2.95

SPECTACULAR

SPIDER-MAN #203 1.25

U.S. AGENT #3 (of 4) 1.75
Agent is captured and drugged by Scourge.

WILLIAM SHATNER'S

TEK WORLD #12 1.75
On the run, Warbride asks Jake for help.

X-FORCE #25 3.50

X-MEN: SURVIVAL GUIDE TO THE MANSION 6.95

PREMIERES

DEADPOOL #1 (of 4) 2.95
Written by Fabian Nicieza, the premiere features a debossed foil cover.

DEATH'S HEAD II & DIE-CUT #1 (of 4) 2.95
A foil-embossed logo covers this explosive team-up.

DEATH'S HEAD II & KILLPOWER:

BATTLETIDE II #1 2.95
This sequel to the limited series features a foil-embossed cover.

KILLPOWER #1 (of 4) 2.95
The UK hero goes solo with a foil-embossed cover.

MORBIUS REVISITED #1 1.95
Re-presenting classic tales of the living vampire.

NIGHT THRASHER #1 2.95
This new monthly premieres with an embossed holo-grafx foil cover.

SABRETOOTH #1 (of 4) 2.95
With 32 pages of glossy paper highlighting the art of Mark Texeira.

VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE #1 (of 3) 1.75
With glossy paper, a holo-grafx foil cover, and The Punisher!

FIFTH WEEK

BARBIE FASHION #32 1.25

CONAN SAGA #77 2.25

DR. STRANGE #56 1.75

DRAGON LINES #4 (of 4) 1.95
The Monkey King & the Spirit Boxer join forces to fight the Emperor.

FANTASTIC FOUR #379 1.25

GHOST RIDER & BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #13 2.25

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

ANNUAL #3 2.95

IRON MAN #295 1.25

LAWDOG #4 1.95
Can Lina save the dying Lawdog?

MARVEL UNIVERSE

HANDBOOK #33 4.95

MOON KNIGHT #53 1.75
The Gambit/Werewolf by Night crossover continues.

THE 'NAM #83 1.75
The conclusion to the HUE battle.

PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #57 1.75

SILVER SURFER #83 1.25

SPIDER-MAN: CARNAGE 6.95

SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #2 3.95

THOR #465 1.25

VENOM: FUNERAL PYRE #1 (of 3) 1.75

WARHEADS #14 1.75
The hypnotized team battle each other.

X-MEN CLASSIC #86 1.25
Rogue masquerades as Ms. Marvel.

JUNE SPOTLIGHT

CAPTAIN AMERICA TPB:

BLOODSTONE HUNT 15.95
A 128-page re-presentation of CAPTAIN AMERICA #352-364.

DOCTOR WHO #200 4.95
Celebrating with a wraparound cover and double-sized poster.

GHOST RIDER TPB: RISE OF THE MIDNIGHT SONS 19.95
A dust jacketed, foil-embossed cover highlights this 224 pager.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #39 2.95
Dr. Doom battles Rancor in this 48-page, holo-grafx foil-covered special.

MARVEL 1993

SWIMSUIT SPECIAL 3.95
With 48 swimsuited pages of everyone's favorite heroes.

PUNISHER

SUMMER SPECIAL #3 2.50
Featuring 48 ad-free pages and a painted cover.

SPIDER-MAN: CARNAGE 6.95
An 80-page bookshelf edition with a foil cover, re-presenting the origin of Carnage.

X-FORCE #25 3.50
"Fatal Attractions" part 2 (of 5) with a wraparound hologram cover.

X-MEN: SURVIVAL GUIDE TO THE MANSION 6.95
A spiral bound, 48-page tech manual.

MARVEL PRESS POSTERS

DEADPOOL 4.95
by Joe Madureira and Mark Farmer.

MAGNETO 4.95
By Jim Lee and Scott Williams.

SPIDER-MAN & MARY JANE 4.95
by Jan Duursema.

INFINITY CRUSADE 4.95
By Jim Starlin.

CROSSOVERS

INFINITY CRUSADE -

ALPHA FLIGHT #123 1.75
Witchfire prepares to battle the Goddess.

AVENGERS

WEST COAST #97 1.25
War Machine, Goliath and Mockingbird battle the Platoon.

CAGE #17 1.25
Cage's deepest secrets are revealed by a newspaper.

DARKHAWK #30 1.25
Introducing a major new villain.

DR. STRANGE #56 1.75
Doc falls under the Goddess's spell.

INFINITY CRUSADE #3 of 6 2.50
Warlock forms an alliance with Mephisto.

IRON MAN #295 1.25
Iron Man battles Technovore.

SILVER SURFER #83 1.25
The Surfer breaks free of the Goddess's control.

THOR #465 1.25
The Goddess sends Thor on a special mission.

WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #19 1.75
Warlock confronts the Mole Man.

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #2 2.00
The Goddess gains control of the Reality Gem.

MAXIMUM CARNAGE -

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #103 1.25
Part 10 of 14; Spidey & Co. battle Carnage and his killers.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #380 1.25
Part 11 of 14; Spidey is at the mercy of Carnage.

SPIDER-MAN #37 1.75
Part 12 of 14; The city burns as the battle rages on.

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #203 1.25
Part 13 of 14; The action heats up.

SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #2 3.95
Part 14 of 14; The final fate of Carnage.

MIDNIGHT MASSACRE -

NIGHTSTALKERS #10 2.25
Part 1; Blade recieves a page from the Darkhold.

GHOST RIDER #40 2.25
Part 2; Switchblade attacks GR.

DARKHOLD #11 2.25
Part 3; The shocking death of one of the Redeemers.

MORBIUS #12 2.25
Part 4; Morb teams with Werewolf by Night to fight Switchblade.**GHOST RIDER & BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #13** 2.25
Part 5; Can the remaining Midnight Sons stop Switchblade?

PUMPING IRON (UK)

KILLPOWER 2.95

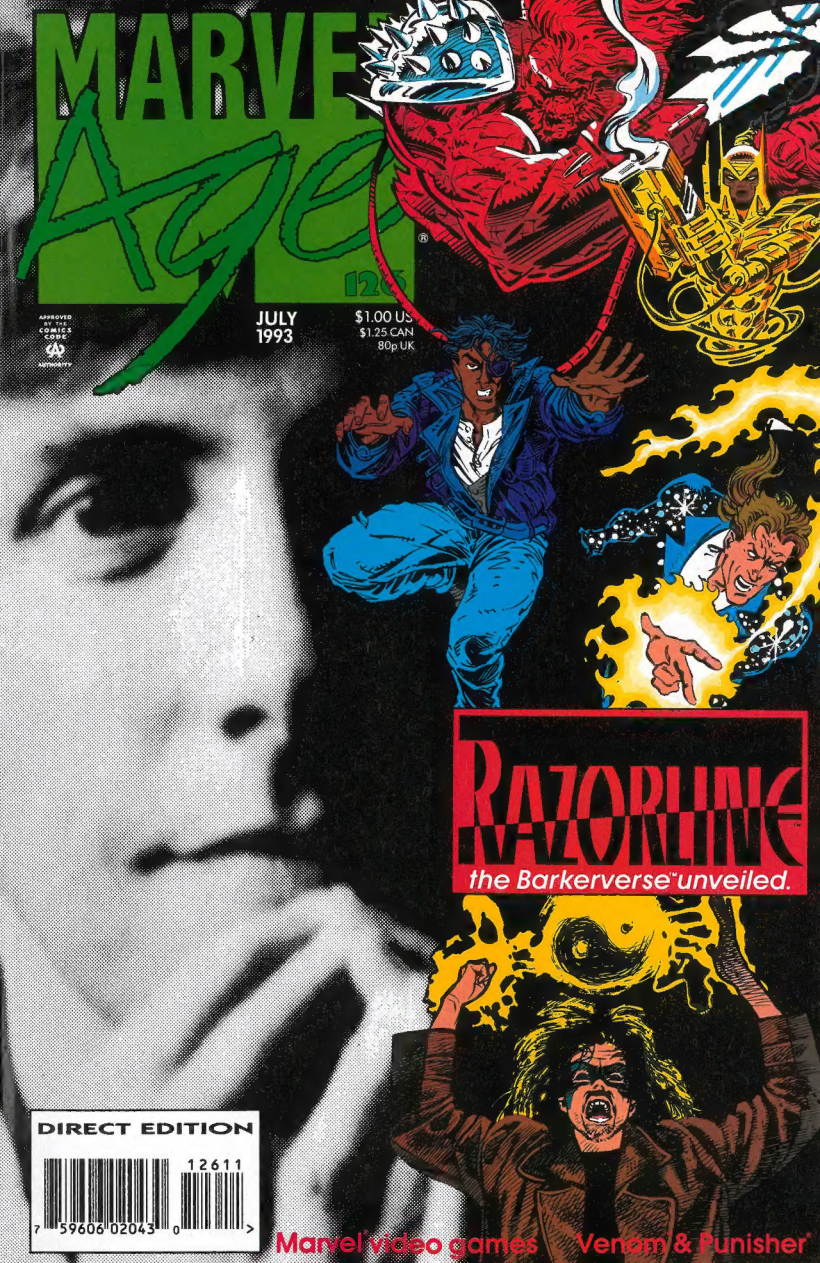
THE EARLY YEARS 1.95
The birth of a killing machine.

DEATH'S HEAD II: DIE CUT 2.95
A new cyborg assassin.

BATTLETIDE II 2.95
Deathe Head and Killpower: the rematch.

PUMP IRON

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOE RUBINSTEIN ELI MALDONADO DAN GONZALEZ 3		JAMES GARDNER 5
GERARD CALABRESE 6	LARRY HAMA 7	MICHAEL HIGGINS RITA SMOLINSKI BERNADETTE AYALA 8	PAMELA RUTT 9	CHARLES VESS 10		DARLENE WALKER 12
13	PAMELA DIAMOND 14 FLAG DAY	DON McGREGOR ROSS ANDRU SPENCER LAMM 15	DAN CUDDY 16	JOEY CAVALIERI 17	MARK GRUENWALD CHARLES O'BRYANT 18	TERRY HETRICK DAN BUCKLEY 19
20 FATHER'S DAY	21	ARMANDO GIL 22	23			TOM DeFALCO LAURIE STECKY TYRON ROWLEY 26
STEVE BUNCHE 27	28	FERNANDO MENDEZ 29	30			


MARVEL
Age
12
JULY
1993
$1.00 US
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
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Venom & Punisher